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# THE CHRISTIAN MOTIVE AND METHOD IN STEWARDSHIP

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# THE CHRISTIAN MOTIVE AND METHOD IN STEWARDSHIP

BY
HENRY BURTON TRIMBLE

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TO

My Father

STEPHEN TRIMBLE

FAULTLESS IN
KINDNESS

## PREFACE

One who now writes on the subject of Christian Stewardship must of necessity traverse well beaten paths. Many have written on this theme, some employing the word "stewardship" in their titles, and others using a different terminology. But the fundamentals of the topic are widely dispersed in modern Christian literature. Hence any contemporary writer is deeply indebted to others who have thought on these things before him.

The author desires to thank the Sunday School Board for the opportunity of preparing this volume. The effort has rendered necessary the study of needs, among the most important, of the modern religious life—the necessity for the cultivation of the spirit of loyalty, and the sense of obligation in the midst of great religious freedom. It has been gratifying to become aware of the fact that a very large volume of literature on Stewardship is appearing at the present time, which, in turn, is indicative of general interest in the subject.

Valuable assistance and advice have been received from many sources in determining the scope and content of this book. Especially helpful were the preliminary discussions participated in by the Sunday School Staff, both administrative and editorial, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The secretaries of the Board of Lay Activities of the same denomination likewise rendered similar aid in the formative period

of the work. Grateful acknowledgment is also made of the invaluable assistance subsequently rendered by the Editorial Staff of the Sunday School Board.

That this little book may make some contribution to a deeper appreciation of our responsibility to God, which, when freely accepted, becomes joyous privilege, is the hope of THE AUTHOR.

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# INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has come into the Church a very widespread interest in Christian Stewardship. At the same time there has been the widest sort of diversity of opinion as to what the subject embraces. Some have emphasized the Stewardship of wealth. Others have thought in terms of the Stewardship of evangelism, the Stewardship of service, or the Stewardship of a world gospel. These are all essential phases of the subject and must, therefore, be included in a well-rounded discussion. This treatment of Stewardship, however, is from the point of view of the whole life. The initial act of Stewardship is the commitment of the person, which commitment necessarily carries with it all possessions and relationships. Moreover, it would appear that any approach from the viewpoint of a special interest would be open to the serious objection of attempting to interpret the whole in terms of the parts, unless a special interest is frankly admitted.

There has also been considerable diversity of opinion as to the basis of Stewardship. One group of thinkers has been inclined to place the requirements of the Jewish law in the seat of authority, especially as regards the Stewardship of wealth, believing, of course, that the law of the tithe was carried forward into the New Testament and is now binding on the Christian. Another group of students of the subject has felt that the legal approach is unsatisfactory in view of the invariable practice of Jesus to place the seat of religious

authority in the motives. The tendency of religious education to emphasize the primacy of motives in the formation of character has also contributed significantly to the latter interpretation of Stewardship.

This study approaches the subject of Christian Stewardship in the confident belief that the best results will come from presenting religion as a power, the function of which is to control the whole life, and that this control can become actually effective only when freely accepted by the person through inner loyalty to the spirit and program of Christ.

The teaching of Christian Stewardship is obviously a function of religious education. The content of religious education is incomplete without the inclusion of Stewardship. Moreover, the teaching of Stewardship is subject to the laws of the educational process just as is any other topic. There is, therefore, the deepest need that Stewardship shall be recognized as an indispensable element in the educational program for the entire Church.

# CHAPTER I

## THE BACKGROUND OF STEWARDSHIP

### What Is Life For?

That question must be adequately answered by every religion that succeeds in winning and holding the allegiance of large numbers of people. The problems of ultimate meaning and function are inescapable. Each person is in the midst of life, is life; and the flow of that illusive something in and about him has baffled the sages of all time. Yet to live rationally that question *must* be answered.

The question of the meaning of life, moreover, is not something to be discussed as in a vacuum, but rather in relation to the actual problems of the present day. Who is the successful person? Is the making of money a proper measure of success? What is money for? Is it to be used in selfish gratification, or for the advancement of the Kingdom of God? By what standard is the Christian to be controlled, the ideals of Jesus or by such non-Christian ideals as prevail in his community? Has Christianity anything to say about war and peace, social justice, race relations, or ideals of government? Are human values greater than economic values? Are we justifiable in saying that Christianity is the hope of the world? If so, why? Under what conditions may the Church become the hope of the world? The meaning of life in relation to such problems as these is the most important of all questions.

The Christian has an answer to the question as to

what life is for. For him the only worth-while life is based on the acceptance and practice of the principle that all resources, both actual and potential, including the person and possessions, are to be made available for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God. Moreover, this answer is given as the natural expression of Christian experience, not as obedience to any external standard. *Herein we discover the basic meaning of Christian Stewardship.*

### The Christian Conception of Life Determined by the Christian Conception of God

1. *God Is Love.*—Jesus was absolute in his belief that God is love; that he is Father, tender, gentle, compassionate. There is in him the power that brought the universe into existence and the strength and wisdom that control it. Yet his ultimate purpose is redemption, even though redemption be through toil and pain.

2. *God's Love Is Active.*—The Christian religion would be on an entirely different basis if it had been said that "God so loved the world" and then had stopped. The other portion of the verse is equally significant—"that he gave." The latter is a functional statement. It represents God with a certain attitude toward the world, an attitude of deep compassion that finds expression in an effort to accomplish the ends of love. Moreover, the giving was purposeful—that eternal life might come to men. A whole philosophy of history is contained in the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of

John. A God of infinite love is seeking the redemption of the world through the voluntary response and loyalty of persons to that ideal of God.

Such a conception at once removes God from the category of the negative, the reposeful, and the inactive, and regards his presence in the world as that of a benevolent being of infinite compassion, employing his resources for the accomplishment of a task worthy of himself, both in magnitude and in quality of work to be done.

3. *God Creates.*—A thousand quotations could be drawn from the Bible representing God as a creative person. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."[1] John was thinking of Christ's oneness with God when he said: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made."[2] "The heavens declare the glory of God" because the stars are his handiwork.

It is of immense significance in the thinking of a Christian that the weight of the authority of the Bible is on the side of placing the ultimate creative power of the universe in God, who is personal love. For surely according to the nature of the creator shall be the final development of the creation. The universe is to conform to God's will. The Bible never surrenders faith in the final triumph of the will of the divine Father. What a significant thing it is to believe that, through

[1] Genesis 1: 1. [2] John 1: 1–3

all the ages in the creative processes that have formed and fashioned all things, there is love and a redemptive purpose. Around the world Christians say: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth." Though they look upon the material universe, their belief is,

> "Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."[3]

Must not every man's ultimate faith be determined by his conception of God?

4. *God Controls Progress.*—The next element in our conception of God is the belief that he controls all things. To speak of the universe as having been created already is in reality only a half truth. God is still creating. Nothing, not even the dead, remains the same. Decadence and disintegration on the one hand and growth and development on the other characterize all things. "God moves . . . his wonders to perform." The rocks of the mountains become the soil of the plain. Prolific vegetation in one age becomes the fuel of another. "Change and decay in all around I see" is not necessarily a melancholy chant, for that is one of God's methods of substituting the higher for the lower. To maintain the *status quo* is the dominant desire of many

[3] Wordsworth: "Lines from Tintern Abbey."

men. That apparently has never been the desire of God.

Human society changes continuously and at a much more rapid rate than mountains and plains. This generation has witnessed the remaking of the map of the world and the passing of great empires, such as Austria, Russia, and Germany. Moral and spiritual upheavals, vast and significant, have come, touching every human relationship. We dwell daily in a changing order. So it has ever been.

The Christian cannot oppose change *per se.* The goal of God is before us. God is in control of all things, and he will not be defeated in his purpose. The incompleteness of our present attainments is the measure of work undone. We live in the expectancy that the Kingdom *will* come.

One of the chief purposes of the present is to be the foundation of a better future. If eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, eternal endeavor is the price of living. The rich fool said: "Soul, take thine ease." Thus he threw himself in the face of a fundamental law of existence and died. God pronounces the same sentence upon all things that take their ease.

This changing order is not purposeless motion. It is inconceivable that a universe so vast, so fascinatingly complex, so hoary with millions of passing years could ever have been, or could continue to be, without the creating and guiding presence of infinite power and intelligence. The Christian religion affirms that the very heart and mind of that power, which is God, are

incarnate in Jesus Christ; and that the purpose of life which he set before the world is in perfect harmony with God's purpose.

An interpretation of God in terms of purposeful love, creating and controlling all things with a view to the establishment of a universe in harmony with his own will, and an interpretation of salvation as union with God in spirit and work make the meaning of Christianity in its application to my life plain. His spirit must reside in me, and that residence of spirit within shall not be as an unharnessed emotion, but as a benevolent passion related to the program of the Kingdom controlled by the recognized will of God. Hence, since it is God's will that all persons shall have the abundant life, it is my duty as a Christian to devote myself to the fulfillment of that purpose. Without such commitment of the person there is no possibility of being a Christian. No life whose fundamental purpose is out of harmony with God can be said to have been redeemed by the power of God.

### The Purpose of the Christian Religion

The purpose that motivated the life of Jesus was his all-consuming desire to bring the abundant life to the world by fulfilling the will of God in persons, the will of God being that all worthy potentialities of persons be developed. When Jesus talked about the coming of the Kingdom, he did not have reference primarily to external arrangements, political, economic, or social. He was thinking of something within man, a spirit

brought to regnancy in the soul by the divine presence. When Paul sent the runaway slave, Onesimus, home to his master, Philemon, and uttered no denunciation of slavery, he was in perfect harmony with the methods of Jesus,[4] although there is nothing more repugnant to the spirit of brotherhood than the possession of a property right in one human being by another human being. Paul was satisfied to rely upon the spirit of brotherhood to solve the problem involved in this case. Likewise Jesus believed that a transformation of motives would accomplish any desired end, and motives center in persons.

*Institutions Have Their Value in Their Ability to Contribute to the Enrichment of Personality.*—The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. To Jesus the distress of a person was sufficient reason for changing the customary order of observing the day. Hence, if man is in distress, he should be relieved. If the disciples were hungry, they had a right to pluck the wheat and eat it on the Sabbath, notwithstandng the law against threshing.

It is the spirit of the law that counts. What is the profit in ceremonial cleansing, whether it be of the body or of cooking utensils, if the heart remain unchanged? Said Jesus in effect: You tithe your garden herbs to the last fractional part, but you forget the weightier matters of the law, such as love, mercy, and justice. Therefore, "Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk in long robes, and to have salutations in the

[4] Read Paul's Epistle to Philemon.

market places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts; they that devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers; these shall receive greater condemnation."[5] A little later he prophesied the coming of the day when not one stone of the temple would be left upon another. Thus the very symbol of their externalism would utterly perish.

The persecution and death of Jesus were largely caused by this fundamental difference of viewpoint between Jesus and contemporary Judaism. To the question, "What is religion for?" they each gave a widely different answer. There was nothing in Christ's personality to induce persecution. He was lovable, gentle, peaceable. His moral character was spotless; his spiritual life deep, rich, and pure. He sought nothing for himself; but, to the contrary, he poured out his life for others in the most sacrificial manner possible. The two religious systems were irreconcilable. The conflict was not personal. It rooted back into mutually exclusive principles.

*The Very Manner of the Coming of the Kingdom Makes of Christianity a Person-Centered Religion.*—"The kingdom of God is within you."[6] "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."[7] All forms of externalism may be seen. In tithing the garden herbs one can count nine for self and one for God. In the matter of a Sabbath day's journey the distance can be accurately measured; and implements of religious ceremonial are before the eyes of all to be seen. But how different with

[5] Mark 12: 38-40. [6] Luke 17: 21. [7] Luke 17: 20.

the Kingdom of the spirit. It is as silent as love. It is as unobtrusive as leaven in the meal. Noiseless as the approach of light, it renders human hearts tender to need and sensitive to the light that never was on sea or land. Such things can take place only in persons.

*Only a Person-Centered Religion Can Be Interested in Persons of Little Consequence from the Worldly Point of View.*—When concern is with institutions, those who can help the institution are sought. But when a religion recognizes the great and everlasting value of persons as such, then all sons of God are as one before him and the offer of salvation goes to all alike.

The text of Christ's first sermon in Nazareth throbs with compassion for all persons. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."[8] No wonder that the hungry hearts of the masses sought him for satisfaction and that prominent men, for whom wealth and position had not supplied the soul's deep need, came to him seeking redemption and peace. For Jesus invited all. His interest in the least favored person was not based upon class consciousness in the sense that he was not interested in the favored classes. His love for the poor was inclusive, not exclusive.

[8] Luke 4: 18, 19.

### Christ's Interest Was in the Person as a Unit

*The Zero Milestone.*—The point from which Christ reckoned the full extent of his mission was, "*I* am come that *they* might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."[9] Wherever there was an incomplete life, hunger or disease of body, defect of mind or spirit, the Redeemer found a mission for the Kingdom of God. Interest in abundance for every phase of life is of a piece with the gospel itself.

Understanding this unity of human life as he did, Jesus did not attempt to dissect the person, selecting certain portions in which he would take an interest and leaving other portions beyond the range of his care. "Thinking love" does not fall into that fallacy. A true father is interested in his son. If the need is physical, he has regard for that need. Likewise with mental or spiritual need. Love strives for the welfare of its object in its entirety.

It would be just as impossible to save men piecemeal as to love them thus, even if such salvation were desirable. Defect in the person at any point defeats Christ's purpose. For example, sin is often due to ignorance. In the Saviour's prayer of forgiveness for those responsible for his crucifixion he ascribes their evil deed to ignorance: "Forgive them for they *know not* what they do."[10] Ignorance is the spawning place for intolerance, hatred, cruelty, and persecution. Moreover, many a malady of mind and heart is traceable to

[9] John 10: 10. [10] Luke 23: 34

physical defects. Even society is so intimately linked together that disorder in one part invariably leads to trouble elsewhere. The throwing of a bomb in a small European capital sets the world afire. Disease in the tenement sends out death to the boulevard. So the religion that looks to the saving of persons must take into account the conditions that affect human life anywhere and everywhere in the world. Jesus flings the hope of the abundant life out to the whole world. There is no human being for whom the gospel of the abundant life is either less or more intended than for any other human being.

## The Cross in Progress

The Christian religion, like every great movement, has a symbol, which embodies its most fundamental meaning. That symbol is the cross. Jesus himself thought of the cross as the most powerful force in his Kingdom. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."[11] The cross is without doubt the most powerful symbol ever contemplated by the mind of man. Its suggestiveness has entered into the very warp and woof of the thinking of civilization. In literature, in music, in art, in philosophy, and even in science, the fundamental and alluring truth symbolized by the cross is ever before us. On the cross self-preserving individualism vanished and gave place to that form of renunciation possible only to persons motivated by perfect love for a great cause. The

[11]John 12: 32.

Redeemer there dramatized the omnipotent power of spiritual perfection completing its function in the gift of life blood for the saving of the human race. The chief desire of man should be the achievement of a racial ideal in harmony with the will of God. The cross, which gives a picture of how life is gained by being given, symbolizes man's ultimate faith that deep in the mystery of life there is a unity sufficiently fundamental to embrace the diversity of ideas suggested by "individual" and "society." The power of the cross has been, and is, the most potent and enduring energy of history.

> In the cross of Christ I glory,
> Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
> All the light of sacred story
> Gathers round its head sublime.

In this high sacrifice Christ led the way, and thereby did the will of God; and one becomes his disciple by following in his train. God suffered on the cross; and the true Christian must identify himself with the agony of deity. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."[12]

*The Kingdom Is in Conflict with the World.*—"I came not to send peace, but a sword."[13] Even members of the same household shall be arrayed against each other. These words still seem strange on the lips of Jesus until we remember the actual method of progress in human society. There we find the stern meaning of the con-

[12]Matthew 16: 24. [13]Matthew 10: 34.

flict side of the Christ. This world has many evils. Narrowness, prejudice, intolerance are here; greed, oppression, injustice give special privilege to some by taking rightful privilege from others. Ignorance had slain the prophets, and oppression had crushed the life out of Christ's own people. Uncontrolled passion, love of ease, inertia, love of wealth, display and ostentation were everywhere destroying the Kingdom purposes of righteousness and brotherhood.

Jesus well knew that the evils of the world would not die out of their own accord. They will be dislodged from society as an army is driven out of its entrenchments—by conflict and suffering. The saints have always "climbed the steep ascent of heaven through peril, toil, and pain."[14] The forces of evil always give stubborn resistance. The sufferings of Jesus and the sufferings of his people are not for the value of pain in itself. He suffered death and we sacrifice because these things are essential in the conflict with evil. The bodies of the martyrs have fertilized the tree of life.

"O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

*Self-Realization Comes through Personal Renunciation.*—When one attempts to save one's life the result is loss of life. One receives through giving and loses by with-

[14]Reginald Heber.

holding. Entering into the Kingdom of Heaven is the most actual of all things. It is veritably the sharing of the life and spirit of Christ. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Paul was grasping the very core of the gospel when he said: "That I may know him and the fellowship of his sufferings." Human life is so fundamentally social that thoroughgoing individualism cannot produce the enrichment of the person contemplated in Christ's purpose for human beings. All Robinson Crusoes must be forever dwarfed in the development of the powers of the person. "The man without a country" was worse than dead, solely because he was separated from his people. Human society is a very vital unity whose progress is realized through coöperation and sacrifice, especially through the sacrifice of the strong for the weak. No one can know the riches of the Kingdom of Love and Spirit without entering into its privileges through sharing its crosses for the great cause of redeeming the world.

True Christians are striving for the realization of God's will in and through themselves. When they find him engaged in the task of redeeming mankind, they cannot desire to do otherwise than join in the work with him. The "wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" of Jesus is a true type of Christian consciousness. The Christian *is* about his Father's business in his Father's spirit. The being about his Father's business in the Father's spirit is what makes him a child of God.

The Christian stands before God and in the midst of

world conditions that dwarf and limit hundreds of millions of human lives. His religion teaches him that God seeks the saving of all these millions to the more abundant life. The presence of God in his own soul causes him to share with God the impulse to save; and that impulse is expressed by the giving of self and possessions. From genuine Christian experience one always receives the sense of a divine mission. That mission is coextensive with Christ's purpose on earth.

### Questions For Discussion

1. What is the purpose of your life? Why, in your opinion, do you live?

2. Do you think a rational God would give you the privilege of life without requiring that it be lived in harmony with his own purpose?

3. Can a person live a satisfying Christian life without admitting the supremacy and imperativeness of the Christian ideal? Is the choice of a Christian ideal ever optional with the Christian?

4. Can you state ways in which other ideals than the Christian ones mar the Christian spirit in our own lives?

5. How would the complete acceptance of the Christian ideal change your own life?

6. How would the complete acceptance of the Christian ideal change the life of your country, your Church, and your community?

7. Can a Christian be care free in the presence of the world's need?

8. What is the difference between contentment and happiness? Which of these is emphasized in the New Testament?

9. Is the principle of sacrifice as symbolized by the cross still necessary in Christian Stewardship?

10. What is your estimate of the part Christian Stewardship should play in the process of religious education?

## CHAPTER II

## THE IMPORTANCE OF ADEQUATE MOTIVATION

CHRISTIANITY is now old enough to be judged by its fruits. A new movement may be forced to seek justification before the world on the ground that it is logically sound. But in the case of a religion that has been functioning two thousand years, as has Christianity, it is sheer folly to offer for its followers a mere theoretical justification of its existence. The fruits of the spirit have had time to mature. Not only is there the ultimate goal in the far distance to consider, but progress must have been made in that direction. So, when the Christian religion lays claim to the loyalty of the race, it must now show what it *has already done* for such portions of the race as have given their loyalty to it.

Moreover, the same method of evaluation should be applied to rival claims within organized Christianity. For example, this discussion of Stewardship is asserting that the purpose of the Christian religion is the fulfillment of the worthy potentialities of all persons in the world; and that this fulfillment is to be brought to pass by the transformation of motives. This position of necessity gives all externals in religion, such as institutions, creeds, and customs, a secondary emphasis. Such an interpretation puts the person "in the midst" and evaluates all institutions according to their ability to serve persons. "The Sabbath was made for man and

not man for the Sabbath."[1] Salvation comes, not through any sort of mechanistic contact or customary belief, such as membership in an ecclesiastical body or formal assent to the statements of a creed. To the contrary, "the kingdom of God is within you." "Ye must be born again." But if this interpretation of the Christian religion is to be accepted and the point of view for the study of Christian Stewardship determined thereby, then the elements of religion here urged as essential ought to have the support of a fruitful history. The purpose of this chapter is to offer such support.

## The Tragedy of Externalism in Religion

*The Exaggeration of the Relative Value of Institutions.*—Frequently in the history of the Christian religion the value of institutions has been so exaggerated that persons who should have been served and blessed by the institution have been sacrificed to it. Invariably this false emphasis has caused a loss of vitality in religion. Two examples will suffice as proof, though several others could be given. These two illustrations are the Roman Catholic hierarchy and Protestant sectarianism.

The keys of the Kingdom were said to be in the hands of the Church during medieval times, and the world then admitted it. The Church, according to this theory, is God's representative in the world. The Pope is the head of the Church and the spokesman of God. When he speaks it is the equivalent of God

[1]Mark 2: 27.

speaking. States, and all other factors in human society both temporal and spiritual, are subservient to him. Likewise the Church must obey his will. Any authority in any sphere exercised against the will of God's representative on earth is audacious usurpation of divine prerogative. The premise granted, the conclusion is logical and inevitable.

Such an exaggeration of the value of an institution necessarily discounts the value of persons. What if the people are ignorant, poor, and depraved! If they are still loyal to the chief thing of value, the institution, there should be no complaint. Suppose immense wealth is extracted from the masses to enrich the Church? Is not the Church worth the sacrifice? If a person stand against the institution, should not the person be disciplined even to the point of taking his life if necessary? The person is of only secondary value, and should perish, if need be, rather than the institution. Hence, practically all of the early reformers lost their lives, because the overlord institution felt that it must protect itself against all critics.

Protestant sectarianism also has given at times an overemphasis to the relative value of institutions. The futility of institutions *per se* was impressed upon the writer by a visit to a town of two thousand inhabitants in a Western State. There were seven Protestant Churches in that community, and not one of the seven had sufficient strength to impress itself significantly upon the life of the people. Why were those Churches there? They were there largely to promote institu-

tionalism, which was the chief end being accomplished and that in most feeble fashion. No group of denominations intelligently motivated by the spirit of Jesus could possibly waste consecrated money and men in that manner. Especially striking was the departure from the desire to serve in the light of the fact that near by were large areas of rural territory destitute of the gospel. And, besides, there were in that country Indians by the thousand, victims of drink, vice, gambling, and evil white men, for whom the Church was doing little.

This is but one example from scores that might be given of how Protestantism like Romanism has frequently placed institutional values in advance of human values, thus fundamentally yielding to the very thing that it originally was raised up to smite.

*The Exaggeration of the Relative Value of Creed.*—Overemphasis upon creed is another example of externalism in religion, which has resulted in giving persons a secondary rating in the accepted scale of values. Under these conditions salvation has been conceived to be the result of intellectual acceptance of an infallible system of doctrine. Necessarily in such a case the emphasis is shifted from persons to something beyond the sphere of the inner life process, and correct statement of doctrine becomes the chief interest of the ecclesiastical body thus motivated.

Probably the worst period of creedal degeneracy in the history of the Christian religion was between the later years of the Reformation and the beginning of the

Evangelical Revival. In the minds of many Protestants, even as early as John Calvin, dogma was taking the place of preëminence that the Church, as an institution, held among the Roman Catholics. When a man reaches the point where he is willing to destroy the life of a theological opponent to protect a system of doctrine, as did Calvin, all sense of proportion in values has been lost. The person is nothing. The system of dogma is all. The position of the true Christ is reduced to a mere semblance of the power and rank accorded him by the early believers.

Therefore, Calvin was willing to kill his brother man in order to protect his creed, for the simple reason that he considered the creed of greater value than the man. Calvin thought he was asking an unanswerable question when he said: "If Rome can take a man's life for error, cannot we do the same for the truth?" He considered himself most merciful when he recommended that the heretic, Servetus, be strangled and then burned instead of being burned alive. But when the decision to burn was rendered by the authorities, Calvin supported the verdict. He doubtless died believing he had, in this, served the cause of Christ.

The bitter struggle over creeds, begun in the days of Calvin, continued on down to the time of John Wesley. The emphasis was placed on the intellect to the exclusion of other elements of the person. Religion became cold and fruitless. Thinking people turned from it as from a thing of no value. The ignorant were unable to understand. All classes turned in large numbers to

gross practices. So low did the state of religion become in England that Montesquieu said that it was non-existent.

*The Exaggeration of the Relative Value of Form and Tradition.*—Brief reference to the sterility of form and tradition will further illustrate the futility of approaching religion from the external point of view. No better example of this type of misinterpretation can be found than the Judaism of Christ's day. The Jews had taken their laws, rooting back into the Decalogue, and through centuries had attempted an external application of them to every detail of life, with the result that at the time of Christ they had more than six hundred major divisions of the application of the law to life. To keep adequately the law forbidding labor on the Sabbath day, at least thirty-nine applications must be remembered. A tailor was not permitted to carry a needle on this day, for carrying tools was unlawful. The disciples were criticized for rubbing the grain of wheat out of the heads between their two hands on the Sabbath in violation of the law against threshing. We have been told that it was a moot question as to whether or not one could wear a wooden leg on the Sabbath. The strict constructionists said no, for that was to carry a burden, which violates the law.

Unfortunately this method of interpreting religion is not confined to ancient history. The New England Puritans objected to bear baiting, not so much we are told because it hurt the bear, but because the people enjoyed it. It is said that a century and a half ago a

minister in Pennsylvania was tried for wearing suspenders. A minister in China recently was in doubt as to whether he could discard his clerical collar in the interest of Christian unity. One becomes weary of the fruitless discussion of what Christian people may and may not do, outside of the field of fundamental right and wrong, and longs to hear again Christ's interpretation as to which is the greatest commandment.

### The Success of Person-Centered Religion

The great advances made by Christianity and Judaism in the past have come during those periods when the emphasis has been placed on the inner life. In the Old Testament it was so. The high-water mark of Hebrew faith came in the period of the prophets, which was a period of emphasis on personal religion. In the New Testament, and in subsequent Christian developments, the same correlation between the primacy of the person and the power of religion is perfectly apparent. The fruitful epochs were those when men understood that God demanded a clean heart; when God spoke to individuals regardless of external forms. Such were the apostolic period, the time of the Protestant Reformation, and the days of the Evangelical Revival. When one thinks of Christian progress such names as Paul, Luther, and Wesley immediately *leap* to the mind; and they were all apostles of the religion of the inner life.

*The Motivation of the New Testament Period.*—The New Testament conception of God as Father, and of people as children of the Father, immediately thrust

consideration of the person to the front. According to Christ, the worth of a human life outweighs all other considerations. "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?"[2] It is not the will of the Heavenly Father that one of even the least should perish. The Father is conscious of our need and is solicitous to do us good. The hairs of the head are all numbered. Even the sparrow's fall is within his notice; foxes have their holes by his will, and it is his hand that mixes the colors for the lily. How much more, therefore, will he take care of his own children! For these children, potentially in his likeness, he gave his Son that they might have the infinitely rich life of his own spirit.

Each person is of such great value according to New Testament standards that he must have the privileges of sonship. Even if he has been disobedient and drifted away, he must be sought and won back. The value is not a mass value; it is a personal value. The three parables in the fifteenth chapter of Luke all teach the Father's solicitude for the individual person. The shepherd who had ninety-nine of his hundred sheep safe in the fold could not be satisfied. Ninety-nine per cent efficiency is not enough where love is involved. Love desires all.

One must be impressed by the refusal of Jesus to recognize the principle of social ostracism and his probable reason for so violent a departure from the customs of his times. Certainly the reason, in part at

[2]Mark 8: 36.

least, must be in the high value placed on persons as such. To Christ even though a woman had committed adultery she was still a child of God. The question of restoring the severed relationships between her and God was more important than the supposed protection of any social values by excluding her from her fellows. Likewise contemporary Jews might refuse to eat with Matthew or Zaccheus, but Jesus saw in them the high qualities that forbade the severing of ties between himself and them. Thus he brought them into the Kingdom and made a world figure of one of them. To the Christian religion human lives are of more value than social customs or standards of decorum.

The value of human life, moreover, forbade hatred among the early Christians. Hatred is a sure method of excluding another from one's own life. All persons are of such great value, however far gone into sin, that they must be an object of deep concern to all who have the Father's love and, consequently, the Father's sense of values.

*The Christian religion is the most fundamentally personal movement in all history.* It has been said that all great European movements have ultimately flowed through the French mind. In much the same way it can be asserted that every great Christian doctrine is vitally related to the person. Every fundamental concept of God has been personal. The doctrine of the Trinity, a rock on which the faith of many has been wrecked, is the great assertion of Christian theology that whenever, wherever, or however the divine being

establishes a relationship with man that relationship is personal. The Bethlehem manger, the inspired altruism of busy days, Gethsemane, Golgotha, and the resurrection morning were all manifestations of the personal God. From Pentecost until now the Christian Church has used personal pronouns in referring to the Holy Spirit. Conversion and prayer have ever been explained in personal terms. To the Christian, worship is not swooning away into mystical nothingness; it is the outreach of a finite person to the infinite person, in order to bring about the fulfillment of his highest potentialities. Impersonal relationships are unknown to the Christian when he thinks of his God.

On the basis of such considerations as these one of the most discerning of modern writers has said: "Jesus is not an argumentative teacher. He could not be. How unlike he is to Socrates the convincer! He is the great proclaimer of eternal truth. Accordingly his teaching is morally axiomatic and self-evidencing. He does not defend it. If men reject it, it is not because his reasoning does not convince them; it is because the teaching itself does not appeal to them. Recognition is what it asks, and acceptance as true. Its success consists in winning its way, so that men acknowledge it and give it the place of truth in their life."[3]

Or again by the same writer: "Jesus was a maker of manhood. He taught personality to direct itself from within. This could not be done by rule; it required

[3] "The Ideal of Jesus." Clark. P. 27. Used by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

education of the man. His training could not take the form of an external discipline; it must be personal, inward, flexible, suggestive, transforming. He was not a lawgiver, but a revealer, an enlightener, a renewer, an awakener of motives, and a mover of men. It is insufficient even to describe him as a teacher—how much more as a lawgiver! He was an inspirer, a creator of ideals, a deliverer from spiritual limitations, a vivifier of souls, a breather of power to fulfill the ideals that he created."[4]

*The Effectiveness of Christ's Method.*—That Christ's method was successful scarcely requires proof. However, strengthening of faith and confidence may come from a few brief suggestions as to the results of the life of that marvelous lover of persons. For, from the very beginning, that well of living water that sprang up in his soul flowed forth into the world in constantly increasing volume, until persons of all nations have drunk and have been satisfied. To know God in Christ through his transforming presence in experience has ever produced the more abundant life.

The apostles themselves were the first proof of the effectiveness of Christ's method. Plain men they were. Sunburnt and brawny from toil, they came into the school of Christ to learn his way. They were obscure men. Had they lived in one of our modern cities, their names would not have appeared in the daily papers, nor would they have been known at all in

[4]"The Ideal of Jesus." Clark. Pages 28, 29. Used by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

prominent business or social circles—nor perhaps in prominent ecclesiastical circles. Jesus called these men into the enriching fellowship of his own presence. But because of what Christ did for the enrichment of their personalities the apostles were transferred from Palestinian obscurity to the very center of the world's progress.

Moreover, Christ's emphasis on the value of persons has undoubtedly been the greatest stimulus to social progress in our civilization. The position of vast multitudes of slaves in the Roman Empire was indescribably deplorable. They were property, not persons. The first thing the Christian religion did for them was to include them in the fellowship, in the brotherhood. That done, the doom of slavery was sealed. Emancipation only awaited the spread of the Christian ideal.

Likewise the position of woman in society, and of childhood, has been profoundly changed by the Christian religion. A protection has been thrown about both women and children through Christian influence for many centuries. More particularly has this been true in comparatively recent times, since emphasis has been placed upon the application of the principles of religion to the social order in conformity with the demand that all elements of society are to be made subservient to Christian principles. So strong has been the influence of this high appraisal of all personal values by Jesus that the status of women and children would be a fairly accurate criterion by which the progress of the Christianization of civilization could be reckoned.

Even in the course of a few decades the presence of the Christian ideal in a country has often caused marked improvement in the esteem accorded both women and children. For example, the rate of the destruction of female children in China began to decline immediately after the impact of Christian civilization was felt.

Even democracy itself, with its fundamental elements of manhood suffrage, freedom of speech, freedom of press, and freedom of assembly, could not be successful without the Christian ideal of the worth and trustworthiness of persons as such. Why should a person be allowed freedom to express his opinions? Why should one be allowed to write freely his views and then broadcast them to the world? Why should one be permitted to vote, and thus express his desire in government even in opposition to the desire of the group in power to force the perpetuity of its own control? By way of contrast, we might point to the incident in which the late President Diaz, of the Republic of Mexico, is reported to have informed a representative of the old German government that he was universally popular with his subjects because he had executed the ones that didn't like him. What is wrong with such an attitude?

The answers to the foregoing questions are to be found only in the Christian appraisal of the value of persons. The social fabric exists for persons. Persons are developed by expression, not by repression. Moreover, the government exists for persons, and they themselves have the right to determine what government

shall be. Participation in government is a part of the process by which both individuals and groups are developed politically and by which they are enabled to make effective their desire in matters of political and social life. The Christian appraisal of the person must always lie at the basis of true democracy.

*It is a significant fact that, as civilization becomes more and more conscious of the worth of persons, the demand for the historic Christ becomes greater throughout the world.* There also appears to be a corresponding lack of demand for the external forms and interpretations that organizations have attached to his name. The world turns to him as the one who can transform motives, for only the new birth can satisfy the heart of the world. The statements of representative men from the ends of the earth, in appreciation of the worth and power of Jesus Christ, could be compiled by the hundreds.

A Madras student recently acknowledged the gift of a copy of the New Testament by saying: "I am grateful for the life story of a man who practiced what he preached."

E. Stanley Jones states that millions in India look to Jesus as the way of life that alone will satisfy and save the world. Among these are some of the best minds in the nation. Gandhi's friends compliment him by saying that he is Christlike. This eminent Hindu addressed a crowd at a railway station—a very large crowd. After reading the Beautitudes to them he said: "That is my address to you. Act upon that." Henry Morgenthau, a Jew, while United States Ambassador to

Turkey, said that the principles of Jesus are the only hope of the world.

There comes from no quarter of the globe a demand for our ecclesiastical organizations, our creeds, or our customary modes or practicing religion. Jesus alone seems to be the religious ideal that the world accepts from us as vital and worth while. Our interpretations of him, and our ecclesiastical organizations, seem to be unable to make a world-wide human appeal. Lecky said in speaking of Jesus that the simple record of his three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists. The secret of power in the appeal of Jesus was, and is, undoubtedly due to the fact of his ability to bring God into the consciousness of persons.

The rediscovery of Jesus, with the accompanying sense of value, has been the dynamic of every revival of religion since the apostolic age. Luther could not have broken the power of the medieval Church, except through the bold proclamation that the individual is free from subservience to an overlord institution and that he can come to God on his own account. The power of the Evangelical Revival was of the same origin. This great religious movement did not begin in a university, but in the heart of John Wesley, when he felt his heart strangely warmed, in the humble London chapel. Henceforth his emphasis upon the new birth, the transformation of the motives of persons, took the place of sectarian controversy over dogma and form.

It also departed from the dead forms of the religion of the Established Church. When the gospel preached by John Wesley began to transform persons the Kingdom was again on the march.

Our chief interest as Christians is to make a Christian world. As good stewards, we desire more than all else that the Kingdom come and that our lives count toward that end. Certainly, if in the history of the Christian religion progress has come mainly during those periods when the emphasis was on the inner life, on motivation, there is now no hope of a successful departure from the path our fathers trod. The trend of the modern educational world is in the direction of the Christian emphasis. Two thousand years of Christian history teaches clearly that the giving of things, and external conformity, without the giving of the self from the heart is unfruitful. There is abundant historical basis for insisting that Christian Stewardship should be interpreted in terms of the commitment of the inner life to the Kingdom ideal. This commitment of persons in the aggregate logically results in the conformity of the Church to the same ideal. Thus only can the Church carry forward the truly Christian program of giving the abundant life to all persons.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Study the lives of John Wesley and Paul with reference to the new power that came to them as the result of their conversion, when they, on the basis of experience, ceased to be legalists and shifted their interest to the religion of the inner life.

2. Do you think the genuine Christian motive in the lives of

Church people plus knowledge of the needs of the modern world would produce sufficient money and personal service to adequately carry forward the program of the Kingdom?

3. Can you name Church projects that have failed for lack of adequate motivation?

4. Can you name Church projects that have not succeeded when properly motivated?

5. In your judgment what is the best method of teaching loyalty to the Christian program in the modern Church?

## CHAPTER III

## STEWARDSHIP OF THE PERSON

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,
And hast crowned him with glory and honor."[1]
"Commit thy way unto the Lord."[2]

THUS man, the highest creature known under heaven, a being whose function it is to dominate all earthly things, is commanded to dedicate those wonderful powers to the service of God. The commitment of one's way unto the Lord, in the sense that the resources of the whole person become assets of the program of Jesus, is the first and most important step toward the Stewardship of man's earthly dominion.

Moreover, the commitment of the *whole* person must be emphasized. Life is life in a more comprehensive and fundamental sense than body, mind, or spirit. In reality, whether we think of possessions or persons, the New Testament gives us no divided picture of consecration. Our attention in this chapter is, therefore, turned to the commitment of our highly potential persons in joyous loyalty and consecration to the life purpose of God revealed in Christ.

### TWO FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE STEWARDSHIP OF PERSONS

*The Development of the Person an Essential Element of Stewardship.*—The Stewardship of the person con-

[1]Psalm 8: 4, 5. [2]Psalm 37: 5.

sists not only in the consecration of the resources of the person already developed, but also in the obligation to develop all of the worthy potentialities of the person. The gospel is always a positive force. Jesus came not to destroy, but to fulfill. The man who developed his talents was approved. The man who permitted his talent to lie idle was condemned. The practice of the Christian religion consists of the things that one does and not of prohibitions. Others might state the Golden Rule in negative form. Jesus expressed it in positive form. Otherwise he would have been inconsistent with his whole approach to the meaning of life. His outlook on life was profoundly positive in every respect.

Therefore, when we approach the problem of why we are allowed to live, we cannot ignore the idea of development. The sluggard, who has nothing to withhold from the Kingdom, is as far from the Christian conception of Stewardship as the industrious person who has developed his powers, but uses those powers in an unchristian manner. Thus the young person who idles away his time in school is violating a fundamental principle of Stewardship. The man in business who might create wealth, but does not, can with little consistency criticize the person who has been frugal, but is not liberal. Neither understands the meaning of Christian Stewardship. Before one *can* consecrate one must develop something *to* consecrate. Especially should this phase of stewardship be brought home to persons in the formative period of life. Youth's greatest obligation is that of self-development that when the

time for larger participation in the affairs of life arrives there will be something worth while to consecrate to the service of God and man.

*The Consecration of the Developed Person.*—The powers of the person when developed must be unstintedly committed to the service of the Kingdom of God; for without the consecration of one's person no other form of giving can have truly Christian significance. "The gift without the giver is bare."[3] "First, they gave their own selves to the Lord."[4] The Christian religion is so person-centered that consideration of any important topic from a point of view other than the primacy of the person would be inconsistent with the mind of Christ. Jesus demanded personal allegiance of men as the condition of admission into the fellowship of his group of disciples. So to-day, as in apostolic times, the chief need of the Church is persons who have consecrated the self to God.

The secret of power in the ministry of Jesus was in the complete surrender of his person to the will of God. "If it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."[5]

The early Christians were similarly motivated. In the days of their great victories they had neither wealth, power, nor social position. There was no great, strong, reputable organization back of them, such as a modern Board of Missions. But they did hold their very persons as assets wholly at the disposal of the

[3]Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal." [4]2 Corinthians 8: 5.
[5]Matthew 26: 39.

Kingdom. If it cost life, they were willing to give it. Wherever they were their lives were assets of the cause. If a man was in the army, he bore witness to his faith to his fellow soldier. If he sat with a group conversing in an Oriental bazaar, that conversation constituted an evangelistic opportunity. Two travelers met on the trade route, or in the streets of a city. One was a Christian and the other not. Then and there an opportunity to Christianize was presented and used. The Christian everywhere told the stranger what the Lord had done for him. The early Christians constituted one of the world's finest examples of what consecrated persons may do for a cause. So it was with the Methodist circuit rider. So it is with many to-day.

*The Unchristianized Person Is the World's Greatest Problem.*—Our best thinkers on social problems regard with deep concern the gravity of the modern social situation. They tell us of the dangers of war, of divisions between classes and races, moral degeneracy, and of the corruption of government. Every one of these problems originates in unchristianized persons.

Such a tragedy as the great World War was not an accident; it was the result of human motives. In recent years Gamaliel Bradford wrote a book entitled "Damaged Souls." This volume gives in brief the life story of ten or a dozen Americans of great ability misused. Aaron Burr and Benedict Arnold, among these damaged souls, are anathema to America solely on the basis of character defects. Recently the American nation was shocked to know that men of sufficient

ability and reputation to obtain positions in the President's Cabinet had used those positions to get unjustly money for themselves and their friends. What a departure from the Christian answer as to what life is for!

Many men whose life history would not assign them to the category of "Damaged Souls" fail to meet the requirements of Christian standards as to the use of their abilities. The rights of persons are not scrupulously observed in making money. Then the money thus accumulated is used for display and luxury. Writers of ability cater to vulgar taste for the sake of putting out a "best seller." A man sells his talent to a newspaper syndicate to write on public issues according to the will of the person who pays the price. To the contrary, what service such men could render their fellows in their various capacities if they thought of life as opportunity to serve!

*Stewardship of the Body.*—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."[6] In contrast to the New Testament, medieval asceticism, through the fundamental fallacy of dividing the person, placed the body and soul in antagonism to each other. The soul was of great value; the body had no value at all. It was, in fact, a liability in that it militated directly against the welfare of the soul. The ascetic's punishment of the body was logically related to his conception

[6]Romans 12: 1.

of values. Therefore, if the soul is of supreme value, and if the body is in necessary conflict with the soul and is of no real value, then the only logical course is to punish and subdue and even injure the body. The hermit who boasted that he had not bathed for thirty years was appropriately punishing the instrument of his soul's destruction.

The ascetic interest, however, was wholly lacking in the teachings of Jesus. The bodies of people everywhere were the recipients of the Saviour's ministries. Tears were elicited from him by the death of the body of Lazarus. The New Testament biography of Christ is filled with accounts of almost countless numbers coming to the Great Healer to be cured of all manner of disease. It is inconceivable that he would have spent his time and energy building up a body the welfare of which is in conflict with a higher value, the soul.

The value of a healthy body is a matter of common sense. As a rule the great benefactors of mankind have been men of strong body. Stanley, Livingstone, Roosevelt, Edison, Grenfell, all illustrate the value of a strong body. Their life story would have been a different tale had they been weaklings physically. Melville Cox went to Africa with all the fine spirit of consecration that characterized Livingstone. Cox was tubercular and died in a few months. Livingstone was a man of steel and served for many years. Only those who seek for a life of fine consecration, cut short, know who Cox was. But the world knows of Livingstone.

The difference between the influence of the lives of these two men was mainly a matter of health.

The social loss from physical defects is beyond computation. No one can estimate the social loss through the premature death of great men. What if Wesley or Wilson or Washington had died young? None of these, together with hundreds of other most useful men, could possibly have done their work without strong bodies and length of days. Moreover, one of the heaviest charges against the exchequer of eleemosynary institutions is due to physical defects.

In the light of such considerations is it not a sin to neglect or abuse one's body? Does not God require of us the strongest possible bodies that we may render the largest possible service? What are the things in modern society that most strongly militate against physical health? These and similar questions face every one who seriously seeks to understand the Stewardship of the person.

## Stewardship of the Mind

*The Exceptional Mind.*—The superior mind constitutes a major problem of civilization. A great managerial brain may control the lives of thousands, even hundreds of thousands, of people. Business life is largely controlled by a small group of men. Brain power is often prostituted to selfish and unworthy purposes. Education may be ultimately directed from a few centers of learning where superior minds in professors' chairs determine what shall constitute the education of many millions of children. Even in the

field of art outstanding individuals have a better chance to impress the world than ever before. The motion picture gives the actor a nation for an audience. The radio does the same for the outstanding singer or other artist. Christianity's responsibility for the faithful delivery of an adequate message here is very grave. Shall these ten-talent people use their ability for selfish ends? Or shall they obey the law of the Christian spirit, which teaches that it is more blessed to give than to receive?

Democracy has brought into society unparalleled opportunity for the development of persons. Thus the great progress of modern civilization is accounted for. There are vastly more people who are able to create than ever before. For example, the United States is spending more money on education than has any other country in the history of the whole world. Our colleges and universities are crowded with students. One medical college in the South had eight times as many applicants for admission to the freshman class as could be received. A Southern State announces a thousand per cent increase in high school graduates in a dozen years. Each year witnesses tens of thousands of academic degrees conferred upon American students.

In the light of the Christian purpose for life, one must ask what will be the motive in this vast system of education? Is there a more important problem in the world than the motive of American education? Are our schools facing the problem as to the why of education? Do our Churches comprehend the importance of a program of

religious training that will force their constituencies to face up to the proposition of the Christian use of the mind? Without the Christian sense of stewardship this splendid preparation must go for naught. But if the social interpretation of religion continues to increase in power, it may be confidently expected that an increasingly large number of men of exceptional ability will give themselves to the service of the public.

However, in our emphasis on the importance of the great brain let us not forget the average person. Most of us are far from being of the ten-talent type. Our time, therefore, will be poorly spent in devising Christian standards for persons of unusual ability if we forget to make personal application of those same standards. The Lord of the talents required that the man who received one talent make use of that one, the same as the person who had received more. There is an unwholesome tendency in our day to set up exalted standards for exceptional people only, when some of the most flagrant violators of the divine law of stewardship are one-talent persons. All must face responsibility. There are no exemptions in Christ's requirement of sacrificial loyalty to the Kingdom.

### Stewardship of Spiritual Resources

The incarnation logically preceded the cross in the life of Jesus, and thus the sense of the Father's presence was the most fundamental fact of his consciousness. As real was the Father to him as the ground on which he walked. "That they all may be one; as thou,

Father, art in me and I in thee."[7] "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me."[8] These and literally scores of other statements by Jesus reveal the fact that his whole life was deeply interfused with the realization of the actuality of the Father's living presence.

Jesus was a perfect spiritual type, using the term spiritual in the sense of the response of the whole person to the actuality of the Father's presence. He passed through no great crisis without praying to the Father. Prayer to him was as natural as one friend speaking to another. At the baptism, when the sense of his mission was uppermost in his mind, he prayed. When the shadow of the cross was falling across his pathway he prayed. On the Mount of Transfiguration, as he did in the agony of the garden and in the despair of the cross, he prayed. Even when Jesus was tired from a hard day's work he often refreshed himself by fellowship with the Father, where most persons would have slept.

Either the sense of the Father's presence, or the recognition of an opportunity to lift a human life, thrilled and absorbed the mind of Christ. A recent biographer of D. L. Moody describes him as one who, when he stood before an inquiring soul, was thrilled from head to foot with the most intense earnestness. So was the life of Jesus. His conversation with the woman at the well took away his appetite. "I have meat to eat that ye know not of" was his reply to the companions who had gone to the village to buy food for him and them.

[7]John 17: 21. [8]John 14: 10.

The life of Jesus was so deeply set in the consciousness of God that to do the Father's will was his chief joy.

Jesus's consciousness of the Father was all-inclusive, which explains the lack of distinctions in his thinking that are commonly made by us. He did not distinguish between the ideal and the practical as we often do. To him religion and ethics were one. Faith and practice root back into the same fundamental unity. Even religion and doctrine are not distinguished. The surface diversities of life are absorbed in a more fundamental unity. Jesus conceived of the life flow in himself as being in perfect harmony with the life flow in God. He had no abstract theory of the Father; he had an experience of him and a doctrine growing out of experience. Faith was the confidence of his whole life in the reality and stability of the Kingdom spirit and purpose and the willingness to give his life for that Kingdom. So perfectly did Jesus identify his person with the Kingdom that he said: "I am the way, the truth and the life." Thus the very animating genius of the Kingdom of God is the immediacy of the Father's presence.

*God the Supreme Value.*—Jesus never thought of the Father as something useful. As, for example, we so frequently hear persons speak of the social value of religion, or the economic advantages of Christianity. Writers have distinguished themselves by pointing out the high correlation between religion and business success. Such ideas were entirely outside of Christ's habits of thought. To be religious for some form of gain is the introduction of mutually exclusive principles, according

to Jesus. Love the Father with the supreme devotion of the whole person is the first and greatest commandment. Such love is essential to that fundamental identification of life with God, through which the fountains of living water flow into human life and without which those fountains fail The Father's very presence glorifies and enriches the person.

Is it not true that when people are "religious" because they think that religion serves some utilitarian purpose, such as commercial prosperity, social stability, or even social justice itself, they are deceiving themselves? Does it not shift the object of religious devotion to the finite, which in the very nature of the case is incapable of eliciting worship? Worship can be ascribed only to God, the Infinite.

Jesus achieved his power in the world by the manifestation of the Father's spirit through himself. He was not distinguished mainly for original ideas. Most of his ideas were already known in the world. The Golden Rule was not a new idea. Even the term "Father" was rather commonly applied to God in the Mediterranean world. Jesus gave no new knowledge at all on any scientific subject. The fact that he contributed so slightly to the world's knowledge has been employed in criticism by many who have been lacking in spiritual discernment. Moreover, Jesus wrote nothing and left no regulations by which individuals or society were to be governed. His chief contribution was the giving of himself.

So absolutely and exclusively was the impression

that Jesus made on his followers confined to the realm of the spirit that none of them told anything whatsoever about his physical characteristics. No one on earth knows any smallest detail regarding Christ's physical life. Was he a blond or a brunette? Was he tall or short? What color were his eyes? No one can tell. Dramatic portrayals of Jesus usually fail. For some reason there is too much in him to be thus represented. He presents God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."[9] Even the sayings of Jesus, and the account of his deeds reported in the New Testament, are very brief—perhaps an hour's reading. The character of Jesus was his great contribution to the world.

The greatest contribution we can make to the Kingdom is that of a Christlike life. Any religious worker whose character is not his chief asset builds upon the sand. "There lies the one man who has ever made religion real to me," said a colleague of Charles R. Henderson, chaplain of Chicago University, after he had died. The world responds to the spiritual idealism of Socrates, St. Francis, or Tolstoy, because they, too, embodied in a very special way their idealism in their own persons.

It is not extravagant to claim that George Fox, Shaftesbury, Wilberforce, John Howard, and John Wesley are to be numbered with the most influential men of the English-speaking world. Most great reforms sponsored by modern Christianity received their initial emphasis from these men. The abolition of slavery, im-

[9]John 14: 9.

provement of conditions among working people, especially women and children, prison reform, abolition of war, and constructive philanthropy and temperance all received great impetus from these men. They were reformers, and more than reformers; they were cleansers and the inspirers of a new social spirit. Wesley, the greatest of the five, has been credited with the religious revival that saved England from the fate of the French Revolution. The significant fact of interest to this topic is that all of these great pioneers in social achievement interpreted their mission in the light of their personal experience of God through Jesus Christ. They first gave themselves to the Lord.

Thus it has ever been with the progress of the Kingdom. Its principles and spirit find lodgment in persons, where they grow and from whence they extend out to the world. To know God in Christ is the first condition of effective Christian service. Therefore stewardship of the person must embrace the development and use of those qualities of the person that have made the lives of men useful to the Kingdom in the past. In answering the question as to what life is for in terms of usefulness to the Kingdom of God all qualities which have a relation to power must be included. Hence, the stewardship of spiritual resources is a solemn obligation of every person.

*Stewardship of Time.*—So important is one's time in the work of the Kingdom, and so intimately is time related to the person, that a word must be said on the Stewardship of Time in this connection. For time is

one of the most difficult of all things to command for the program of the modern Church. Money may be given out of a surplus without sacrifice, but usually the giving of time is sacrificial. Moreover, only through the gift of time is it possible to establish those personal contacts which are most essential to the progress of the Kingdom.

The writer asserts without the slightest doubt that one of the *most acute* problems in his congregation is to secure the time of the people for education, inspiration, and service. For example, if the pulpit is to be an effective educative force there must be regularity of attendance on the Sunday services. With the difficult and vital problems of the modern world, which cry for religious solution, there is the greatest sort of need for ministers of the flaming heart and the open vision to preach regularly to people that the mind of Christ may be permanently recognized as the hope of the modern world. Moreover, the administration of the Sunday school and of other educational agencies of the Church requires the time of many people. Often the greatest possible losses in Church work are sustained by the lack of a conscientious use of time. For example, Sunday school classes, composed of pupils at strategic periods in their lives, are often lost to the Church because of the teacher's failure to give the necessary time to the work. No program of stewardship can be adequate to modern needs without rendering a considerable portion of the Christian's time available as an asset of the Kingdom.

The person who lives a life of loyalty to the program of the Kingdom must answer certain fundamental

questions as to the use of time. What should a Christian do with his leisure time? If the day is divided into eight hours for labor, eight hours for sleep, eight hours for recreation and service to fellow man, what portion should be given to service? Laying aside all legalistic conceptions of the Sabbath, is it actually profitable to make a holiday of Sunday? Is the claim that Sunday is needed as a holiday for laboring people justifiable in the light of modern conditions, when hours of labor are so short? Are the qualities of the person, nurtured by worship, the study of religion and service sufficiently indispensable to justify their inclusion in the program of every well-ordered life? In other words, in our consideration of economy in the use of time is it profitable to eliminate religion as an important factor? Certainly one can render no important service to the Kingdom when the claims of religion are put on the basis of convenience.

### The Inevitable Alternative

Practically everything in life has a twofold possibility. Dynamite may be used either constructively or destructively. Steel may be made either into a sword or into a plowshare. Medicine taken properly will cure; taken improperly it may kill. Music may be a bore or an inspiration. So the powers of the person may be dedicated to high and holy purposes or degraded to the very lowest.

Herein lies the basis of the moral order of the universe and of persons. If there is no choice, there is neither

blame nor praise. Even the civil code, seeking only justice, recognizes the intimate relation between the right of choice and legal responsibility. The fact that God has made us free in the use of our persons, which is an indispensable condition of the development of the person, lays upon every one the obligation of choice in harmony with God's purpose. What is the Father's will concerning the use of the person is the most fundamental question in stewardship. The great alternative between paganism and Christianity is flung out before the world. Every man must choose how he will relate himself to the great issues of his world, and upon that choice depend the quality and the destiny of his life and service.

The effective Christian workers have always given themselves in a spirit of deep consecration. Paul said that he had in his body "the marks of the Lord Jesus."[10] Livingstone said a very short time before his death: "Nothing earthly will make me give up my work in despair. I encourage myself in the Lord my God and go forward." When Constantine called the leaders of the Church together to formulate a creed for a united Christendom, he assembled a group of men many of whom had scars in their body—marks of persecution. Even limbs and eyes were gone, having been given in sacrifice to the cause. The garments of Christ have always been made for persons of sacrificial mold. They fit no others.

The person has been treated as a separate entity in

[10]Galatians 6: 17.

this chapter with the hope of making some impression as to the immense resources bound up in it. It is to be understood, of course, that persons come to fulfillment in their relations with others. Pure individualism is entirely fanciful. The abundant life is to be found in the Kingdom, not in solitude. Hence the next logical step in this discussion is the stewardship of relations.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Name men of exceptional ability who are using their powers according to the principles of Christian Stewardship.
2. Name men of similar powers who are controlled to a considerable extent by pagan ideals.
3. What change would take place in your life if the powers of your person were fully consecrated to the service of the Kingdom of God?
4. How would a similar consecration affect your congregation?
5. To what extent is society now failing to give to everybody the opportunity to develop the more abundant life? Discuss also the opportunities for personal development afforded by modern society. Let this discussion embrace both Christian and non-Christian countries.
6. In what ways would the control of time by stewardship principles affect the modern Church?

## CHAPTER IV

## LOCATING THE SOLUTION OF PRESENT PROBLEMS OF RELATIONSHIP

One may properly discuss the individual as something apart from others, but only as a matter of convenience; for every person is so definitely related to his fellows that he could not be fully interpreted apart from them. The unsocial being is so rare as to be almost unknown. "For God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."[1] Mankind is socially interdependent to a remarkable extent, even in the simplest affairs of its existence.

The stewardship of relations embraces all human contacts; and it lays upon the Christian the obligation of making these contacts Christlike. Our influence on others is confined to relations; and it is probably not too fanciful to say that all relationships have some significance with regard to the Christian purpose for life. The person who is motivated by the Christian spirit necessarily contributes to the power of that spirit in social affairs. The extent of his ability to do so is the measure of his stewardship in the field of relations.

### Locating Relationships

*The More Obvious Relationships.*—The more immediate contacts of society are perfectly obvious even

[1]Acts 17: 26.

to the most casual observer. One will speak of "my relatives." These words usually refer to blood kin, or to persons who have married into the family. Wife, children, sisters, brothers, father, mother, aunts, uncles, cousins, *et cetera*, are usually regarded as "my relatives." Moreover, loyalty to these more restricted relationships is usually strong and quite general throughout the world. Even the most primitive people are loyal to such relationships. An Australian bushman is conscious of the ties of the clan, and to these ties he must give allegiance. Or the Kentucky mountaineer, a generation ago, killed and was killed because of his loyalty to these family ties. In fact, human society could not exist without loyalty.

*Even many of the broader relationships of society are obvious.* One cannot fail to see his own relation to the community. The laws and customs of the community have to do with his daily life. He must obey the traffic regulations, send his children to school, and have them vaccinated. He sees the church building frequently, and also comes into touch with the people and activities of the Church. The merchant must be aware of the customer and the customer of the merchant. The railway management must come into contact with the laborer, and the laborer must deal with the management. Certain race relations must be obvious to every one. The problem of where the children of each race shall go to school, the problem of economic status and opportunity, or the privileges of citizenship to be extended or withheld from various racial groups, keeps

the problem of race ever before the modern man. Moreover, national consciousness is a real fact in the modern world, which in some cases brings hundreds of millions of people into conscious participation in the same group loyalty. The United States, China, Great Britain, and Russia, each has a group loyalty embracing more than a hundred million people. These relationships are understood by every one because they touch directly our daily lives.

*The Less Obvious Relationships.*—The unity of all civilization is not obvious to the casual observer; nevertheless that unity is an *actual* fact. No part of the human family is completely isolated from the rest of the world. Human relations are analogous to the radio. Without visible means of transmission, messages travel thousands of miles over the radio in the fraction of a second. So with this human society of ours. We may not see the Chinese soldier marching with his gun, more or less blindly groping for the light of hope and progress that has come to other nations. His influence is felt in America just the same. Was the throwing of a bomb by a fanatical student in Serbia no concern of ours? So we did drowsily think in the summer of 1914. But the conflagration kindled thereby extended to all the world, including the jungles of Africa. Commercial depression in Europe makes unemployment in the United States. Humanity is as truly connected in one comprehensive unity as the physical universe is held within the grasp of the law of gravitation.

The creation of world consciousness is certainly one

of the major functions of the Christian religion. Most of the social distress of human society grows out of the lack of a sense of the essential oneness of the race. The realization of unity is essential to coöperation, while strife, even to the extent of war, grows out of a sense of difference, and the supposed conflict of interest between groups. The need of the removal of the obstacles that prevent the realization of human brotherhood places a heavy burden of responsibility upon the shoulders of modern Christians.

### Fundamental Denials of Human Unity

*Racial Antagonism.*—Racial antagonism fundamentally denies the unity of the race and is one of the most difficult problems with which the Christian religion has to do. It has been almost universal in the history of the world, and these feelings have been deep and almost ineradicable. The Jew divided the human family into Jew and Gentile. To the Greek it was Greek and Barbarian, while the Roman thought of the citizen and the enemy. Even down to the present day such cleavages cut deep into the sense of the unity of the human family. Just now volumes are appearing to prove Nordic superiority over all other races and the right of strong races to dominate the weak ones. It is claimed that the strength of the Nordic lays upon him the obligation to rule and, therefore, gives to him the privilege of exacting obedience and servility from others. Let the others, they say, be hewers of wood and drawers of water, for for such causes were they brought

into the world. Strangely enough the writer recently listened to an address delivered by a distinguished rabbi on the Jewish problem, in which the speaker took the position that the Jewish problem grows out of the fact of the superiority of the Jewish race over all other races.

*East and West.*—Both East and West in the past two centuries have felt contempt each for the other. Here in America we hear but one side of the case. Our more self-conceited patriots assume an undoubted superiority over other countries, more especially the countries of the Orient; and if proof of superiority were to be required, the superior guns of the West would be accepted by them as infallible demonstration.

To the contrary, our so-called more internationally-minded citizens frequently lay complete blame for the bad feeling between East and West at our own door, assuming that we are the only offenders in these international disputes and that we take advantage of our superior military strength to exploit nations void of offense merely because these nations are defenseless. But both East and West, together with all other races, must learn the "one-blood" doctrine of the Christian faith, for all have departed from it.

The account of many interesting examples of the attitude of the East toward the West might be given. In the ancient day representatives from the other nations to China were not received in Peking, but at Canton, because of the alleged impropriety of receiving such inferior persons in the Celestial capital.

Moreover, any gifts that were brought by foreigners were always accepted as tribute from an inferior to a superior. But it is a far cry from those days to the modern time when Western wealth and military power have brought to submission the proud rulers of the East. Many a Nordic now looks down upon the brown-skinned Oriental, thinking of him as a servant, a laundryman, an inferior, instead of a person of many excellent qualities, who has something of great value to contribute to the wealth of human culture.

*White and Black.*—Again, white and black races regard each other with an antipathy which, if diminishing, is *yet* all too strong. Almost universally the permanent inferiority of the black man is assumed by the white man, which puts the former in the attitude of struggling against the white man for a place in the sun, for the opportunity to fulfill the potentialities of his person as a son of God. It is obviously true, however, that the privilege of self-realization through fellowship with all people cannot consistently be denied to any one by Christians; and the strong tendency the world over to make such denial is a challenge to the Christian belief in universal brotherhood that cannot be evaded.

*The Class Struggle.*—The class struggle militates strongly against the establishment of relations on the Christian basis. The conflict grows out of two fundamentally different conceptions of life. Behind the one conception is the belief that economic necessity renders strife between the classes inevitable. Say the exponents of this theory: "There is not enough produced for all

to have plenty." Hence, the possession of the prizes of life shall be determined by competition, the race going to the swift and the victory to the strong. It is further contended that the management of business enterprises, and the control of other matters pertaining to our social life, should be in the hands of a few leaders who give orders arbitrarily and demand unquestioning obedience from the motive of enlightened self-interest. These views and practices are countered by combinations of the less favored but more numerous classes, who see the possibility of relief only in combinations of force to resist force. Thus are perpetuated in human relations those principles that prevent the development of human fellowship and the fulfillment of the potentialities of persons by mutual aid; and this in the face of an unprofitable experience lasting through many decades, uniformly tending to discount the theory that strife and competition are the primary incentives to commercial progress.

A very simple example will clearly illustrate the contention that strife means waste in business. Recently the United States has had a coal strike. Severe suffering and great losses have resulted. Surely such a costly struggle could not be justified unless great gains had resulted from the conflict. We search in vain for those gains. The employers have not gained in point of profits. Instead, they have suffered loss. The employees have not profited. Instead, they have heard their children cry for bread. The public has lost in that the supply of coal has been scarce and the price high. It

is to be doubted, moreover, if there is any substantial promise of future benefits. The sense of defeat in the case of either owner or worker is merely a stimulus to prepare for future conflict, with the hope of turning the tables on the victors.

The results of the coal strike are typical of the fruits of industrial warfare. Positive benefit does not and, in the nature of the case, cannot result from such contentions. *The industrial order is no more benefited by strife than is any other social unit, as, for example, the family.* Surely these upheavals in business must be looked upon as a mere passing phase of the process that will lead to sane and productive coöperation.

There is a lesson for our industrial order in a story told by Captain Scott, of Antarctic fame. A seal, the story goes, had just been killed and lay dead on the ice. Birds came to devour the carcass. But instead of proceeding with the feast, which would have been abundant for all, they fell to fighting each other. When the strong had vanquished the weak the carcass had frozen until neither talon nor claw would penetrate the frozen flesh. Thus neither victor nor vanquished had food. So it is with human beings. They contend with each other for advantage while all parties to the conflict lose. There is no form of industrial strife that does not consume resources that might otherwise be used for constructive purposes.

Dean Sperry very aptly says: "We are living in a world which has all but exhausted the moral possibilities of the dogmas of enlightened self-interest, free com-

petition, paternalism, and kindred nostrums; a world which finds itself driven on by this process of moral elimination to the religion of Jesus."[2]

## Proposed Remedies for the Discords of the Human Family

*The Need of a Remedy Obvious.*—The fact that the social problems of the human family are exceedingly acute cannot be questioned. Not that social conditions are getting worse, but that the increasing value being placed on persons the world over renders the social conscience more sensitive to the wrongs committed against human beings of any class or race. Except for temporary lapses here and there over the world the condition of the laboring man is improving everywhere. Underprivileged races fare better than ever before; and weaker nations enjoy some exemption from outside aggression, whereas they were formerly a prey to any strong power that wished to exploit them. The most acute stage of any problem occurs just prior to its solution. At that time opposing forces, the one seeking the retention of the *status quo* and the other seeking its overthrow, gird themselves for utmost effort to conquer. Upon such times the world seems now to have fallen.

For centuries the leaven in the meal has been at work creating a social conscience on the value of persons. Hence to-day the human race is seething with

[2] "The Disciplines of Liberty," Sperry, page 1. Used by permission of the publisher, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

aspiration for the social hopes of Christ. In fact, modern social movement is so rapid that many thoughtful observers have a feeling of strong apprehension lest too rapid progress be attempted with disastrous results. The more fearful persons of this class wish to turn back to some form of social control that would seriously curtail individual freedom by placing greater power in the hands of the government, the government, in turn, representing the judgment of the so-called better classes. Others courageously appraise proposed social solutions with the hope of discovering something that will inspire and direct the enormous energies of the human family into constructive channels without destroying the incentives to progress.

*The Proposed Return to Corporate Domination.*— Fascism in Italy, for example, is clearly motivated by faith only in corporate domination. Their leader, Mussolini, very frankly states his belief that the day of democracy is over. A new set of social conditions has arisen, so he claims, that render democracy of the American type obsolete. Groups are not self-directive. They are directed by able and authoritative leaders. Persons ought to be in the social niche to which they are adjudged by their superiors to be best suited, there to be controlled by a strong government with power to act. Discussion being the bane of democracy, it ought to be controlled both in assemblies and in the press. The nation needs efficiency. Individual liberty militates against efficiency. Therefore, curtail liberty to whatever extent may be necessary to protect the hand

of the government in its efforts to create an efficient society, efficient in the sense of getting things done. Mussolini speaks often of the glory of the ancient Roman Empire and holds the hope of the return of that glory before the people as an ideal toward which they should strive. He knows well the principles on which the power of ancient Rome was based; and he seeks the return of the power of the nation on the basis of those same principles. To him back to Cæsar's glory means back to Cæsar's principles.

The criticism of the individualism of democracy is in part justifiable, in so far as democracy is to be judged by present results. Millions have interpreted the release of the person from the domination of external social control as an occasion for selfish individualism. Against such tendencies the Christian must protest with all vigor. The point at issue, moreover, is not the inadequacy of selfish individualism. All admit that the real problem is to save individual liberty, both from personal selfishness and external coercion. No social solution that is not able to perform these two functions can possibly guarantee both social solidarity and progress.

*The Christian Solution.*—The Christian religion claims to be the remedy for the social ills of mankind. And there are three aspects of its genius that entitle it to consideration at this point. (1) *Its spirit is broad enough to embrace the world.* (2) *It elicits the strongest type of voluntary loyalty.* (3) *Its profound regard for the rights and potentialities of persons creates an atmosphere of*

*freedom congenial to the development of the highest qualities of individual character.* These three characteristics of the Christian faith parallel the fundamental needs of the social order of the present day.

*The consciousness of the modern world is still provincial.* Therein lies the chief reason for the world's conflicts. One nation, race, or class feels profoundly conscious of itself as a unit, but usually there is a corresponding sense of disunity between itself and other races, nations, or classes. The tragedy of the World War that shook the very foundations of society resulted from the lack of a sense of world unity. It was felt by the Central Powers that they were underprivileged in point of access to the raw materials of the earth, in point of opportunity to market goods, and in point of the possibility of developing an adequate transportation system to facilitate exporting and importing. They claimed that other nations sought to limit the development of their powers by holding fast to privileges in which they themselves had a right to share. On the other hand, the Allied Powers saw in Germany an overambitious people seeking world domination. Hence, there developed a deadlock in civilization, due to the failure of the human mind to grasp the essential unity of human interests. Opposing camps were formed, based on a sense of diversity of interest, with the result that the accumulated wealth and the credit of the race were exhausted in a war of unprecedented destruction of both men and morals. Thus the world paid the price of the inability of the race to think of itself as a whole.

Christianity offers the doctrine of human brotherhood, based on the fatherhood of God and the great value of all persons, as a solution for all problems arising out of the apparent conflict of interest between the different groups of mankind. That God is one, and Father, compels belief in the unity and brotherhood of the race. It is quite inconceivable that such a God would so constitute life that its ultimate characteristic would be division instead of unity.

*The very symbolism of the Church strongly attests the belief of the Christian in the unity of the true society.* Both baptism and the holy communion are deeply set in the consciousness of human fellowship. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one spirit."[3] Likewise the communion gives the strongest kind of emphasis to the idea of fellowship. So strongly and generally is the idea of fellowship related to communion that it is felt that the rite of brotherhood pervades the group. "Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins and are in love and charity with your neighbors" is a part of the language of a communion invitation familiar to many millions of Christians. The fellowship of the communion table extended out to all relationships between the early Christians. They were brothers in ultimate fact and purpose. "The communion of saints" is the expression of a common and fundamental New Testament conviction, a conviction grow-

[3] 1 Corinthians 12: 13.

ing out of an experience of fellowship that in large part accounted for the power of Apostolic Christianity.

The spirit of Jesus profoundly influenced his followers, even in relation to the outside world. In him, the person as a separate individual, developed and enriched to the greatest possible extent, found itself in perfect accord with the aspirations of all other persons for similar development. There was no limit to Christ's interest in human welfare. No one could say in any sense pertaining to the good of men, "Here Christ's interest ends and disinterest begins." And he imparted this broad sympathy to his disciples.

When this spirit of Christ entered and possessed the souls of those humble men, who composed the first group of Christians, two results followed. They, in the first place, developed a most remarkable spirit of brotherhood among themselves. In the second place, they also committed their lives without reservation to the work of spreading the gospel, that meant so much to them, to all parts of the world, in obedience to the command of the Great Commission.

*The Problem of the Modern Christian.*—True Christians of the modern world, faced by the gravest kind of social perils, such as strife between races, nations, and classes on the one hand, and the danger of abandoning the social hope through fear on the other hand, assert that Jesus Christ has released a spirit of sufficient breadth and sympathy to furnish the basis of world-wide human brotherhood and coöperation. The futility and the hopelessness of the age-old spirit of strife

and corporate domination become apparent in the light of social results achieved thereby. There is no hope left in the old methods. The "To whom shall we go?" of the early disciples comes to us to-day with both individual and social significance. We face the alternative of Christ or destruction. It is brotherhood or social death.

The machinery of society would be utterly demolished by the attempt to reverse the order of progress. Moreover, why should society turn back from the way along which the Christian ideal seems to be leading, to the pagan methods, which have already been tried and found wanting? Since our interest is not merely in human unity, we also require freedom for the development of the person. Society exists for the person, and there must be freedom to develop persons.

### True Freedom

There are two general types of freedom. *The first type* is the result of the view that freedom means unleashed desire. Self-expression, says this interpretation, is the only theory consonant with the development of the highest type of person, self-expression meaning, of course, that every desire should be satisfied, and without reference to standards beyond the self. Persons who restrain themselves through fear of social penalties or through loyalty to social standards are in reality weak and inferior. There is in the person itself the necessary urge to its own completion. Therefore, give free reign to the individual, and the meaning

of life will thus be discovered. This type of freedom is incompatible with social living.

*The second type of freedom*, and the type that Christianity espouses, is that kind of liberty that results from the commitment of the self to an ideal sufficiently great and permanent to command the everlasting fidelity of the soul. Jesus frequently urged surrender to the ideals of the Kingdom as a method of obtaining freedom. The way to save life, declared the Great Teacher, is to give it. Torn and distraught by conflicting forces within, personal surrender to the Christ brings unity and peace. Bernard Shaw in "Man and the Superman" makes Tanner, the young man, say to Ann, the young woman whom he had known from childhood, that he had found his soul in the discovery of a master passion, thus substituting a consuming desire and holy purpose for a mob of appetites. In this same sense Jesus calls upon men to seek first the Kingdom of God. When they thus seek the Kingdom as the controlling passion of their lives, they find freedom from the divisions of self and enrichment of the person through voluntary allegiance to the divine will.

## The Solution

The Christian religion by its ability to unite the seemingly disparate elements of social loyalty and individual freedom offers the only substantial hope for the solution of modern social problems. Mankind having tasted liberty will not turn back again to bondage. That freedom must be controlled in the in-

terest of the common good is perfectly apparent. That strife among men is fundamentally destructive one can scarcely doubt. Moreover, the cry of the underprivileged of the earth will not cease. They stand at the door of the world's fellowship and knock. Their admission to participation in the good things of life is indispensable to the peace and harmony of mankind. We cannot cry peace in the midst of injustices that prevent the development of persons, our fellows. Jesus places before us the hope of a unified human family wherein the level of existence shall be determined by the potentialities of the persons involved, for each shall have his opportunity to be his best. Men are called upon to give their lives for the realization of Christ's social hope. In fact, they become members of the Christian society themselves only as the establishment of this divine order becomes the master passion of their lives. Thus does Jesus find his way into the depths of human relations where one fundamental attitude of loyalty to the divine will achieves both the freedom of the person and a solidarity coextensive with human existence and human need.

In conclusion, the Christian finds himself in the midst of a great variety of relationships with his fellows, ranging all the way from the person working at the next desk or on the adjoining farm to the marvelously complex elements of the modern world-wide social order. These relationships in the aggregate constitute one's opportunity to do good to his fellows. Moreover, at this particular period of the world's history the oppor-

tunity to render service is exceptionally great. Humanity is endeavoring to break away from its old ways, ways of division and strife, and of autocracy, to the ways of peace, coöperation, liberty, and joyous service. The admirable adaptability of the Christian religion to this particular situation affords the Christian of our day an unusual opportunity and lays upon him a grave responsibility. The Christian's social relations at the present time offer more, and require more, than at any previous period in the history of the Church.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Make a list of human relationship in your community that have special bearing on the development or repression of persons, such as the status of domestic servants, foreigners, or labor. Are persons being seriously limited in their opportunities for development by the desire for profit, discriminatory attitudes, poor schools, or otherwise?

2. If the Christian ideal of brotherhood is taken seriously and made the controlling factor in social relationships, what must be the fate of national, class, and racial prejudices? Have these prejudices justified themselves in the social order? What have been their benefits? Are they essential to the development and maintenance of group loyalty? Is coöperation a more constructive force than strife? Why?

3. Discuss ways in which a Christian may aid in Christianizing relationships. Have our common everyday relationships important value in this regard? How do you account for the affection that often existed between master and slave? Why the difference in attitude on the part of workers in different industrial plants, as, for example, in the Nash Clothing Company and in the coal industry? Is there any legitimate relationship that cannot be Christianized? What do you think of missions as agencies of good will, especially in international relations? Can the world have peace while half pagan and half Christian?

## CHAPTER V

# THE FAMILY AND GOVERNMENT AS AREAS OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

LET us now turn to the application of the principles of Jesus to specific social relationships.

### THE FAMILY

*The Importance of the Family.*—In the thinking of Jesus the family was the institution of major significance. So meaningful were the family relations to him that he employed the terminology of the home to explain the relationships of his Kingdom. Therefore, when a word was needed to interpret the meaning of God to men the family furnished the term, "Father." Likewise when Jesus wished to explain the true relation of men to each other he went to the home for his language and said that mankind viewed in its true light is a family.

The employment of family terms by Jesus to explain the meaning of the Kingdom was not accidental. For words are but the symbol of human experience. Thus in the *true home*, where father, mother, and child all participate, both in the privileges and the sacrifices of the group; where helplessness is loved and protected; where sins are forgiven and forgotten; and where each is for all and all are for each; and where the person of each is inviolate, those sentiments that are most Godlike became associated with the vocabulary of the family.

And it is through these relationships, known to men, that they find the experiences and the language that enable them to interpret God. The true family is a miniature Kingdom of God.

*The Historic Position of the Church.*—The Christian Church, throughout its history, has placed strong emphasis upon the permanence and sacredness of family relationships. For two thousand years it has stood for a single standard of sex morality. That the discipline of social disapproval for infidelity should be visited more severely upon woman than upon man is of pagan origin. Jesus would not permit the man equally guilty with the woman to stone her. Contemporary standards gave the man that right. It has been truthfully said that the word "Concubina" has never been written on the gravestone of a Christian man's wife. The lapses of society on the sex question have been over the protest of organized Christianity.

Moreover, the Christian world to-day is closer together on the interpretation of the home than on any other subject. The Roman Catholic Church regards marriage as a sacrament, and thus indissoluble. The Church of England is emphatic in its opposition to divorce, and especially to remarriage. The Methodist Church is opposed to divorce except "for the one scriptural cause," while the Reformed Churches vigorously opposed divorce; and they have consented to the granting thereof only on the grounds of adultery or desertion. Even at the present time the Church in the interest of permanent family relations is standing with

great firmness against a veritable flood of criticism made by powerful elements in society that wish to change our theory of marriage in the interest of laxness.

*Moreover, the Christian ideal for the family is not limited to the prohibition of divorce and of remarriage.* The matter of fundamental importance is the keeping of the home intact as a place for the nurture of character. Hence, if the home is broken up and the members of the family thus deprived of its benefits, it is entirely erroneous to suppose that no wrong has been done merely because neither the father nor the mother marry again. Even though the home be not broken up at all in the sense of the separation of the parents, if the true spirit of the home be lacking, the real purpose of the institution has been defeated. Our approach to the stewardship of family relations, being Christian, must embrace all conditions that pertain to the development of the character of the members of the family. Can a Christian father and mother bring children into the world without endeavoring to make adequate provision for them in every way?

No one could possibly have a greater responsibility than that of maintaining an atmosphere in the home conducive to the development of the best type of men and women. What shall it profit a mother to reach the highest social pinnacle in her community and fail to lead her daughter in the way of true living? In our complex and rapidly moving social order there is surely no need greater than that of parents who will commit themselves earnestly to the task of creating a successful

home at all cost. Is there any demand of sufficient importance to justify parents in making their home a matter of secondary importance? Our children are entitled to parents who believe in God, practice his precepts, and recognize his standard of values as determinative in the choices of life. Here is a stewardship duty which no Christian can avoid.

*The Underprivileged Family.*—So important is the family in the life of society that the community should recognize responsibility for the underprivileged family. These families may be underprivileged in many ways. There may be poor sanitary conditions in the neighborhood over which the family has no control, or concerning which it has no interest. Parks may be located in the fashionable residential districts, where they are least needed, instead of in congested districts where density of population renders life difficult, especially for childhood, and where a park would be a godsend. Community moral conditions frequently handicap the children of the poor.

Furthermore, insufficient family standards are frequently maintained because of low wages, ignorance, or disease. Therefore, a Christian society, motivated by a desire to develop its people, by virtue of which motivation it *is* a Christian society, must face the problem of supplementing and improving the substandard home.

*The Home and Juvenile Delinquency.*—Society to-day has an almost unparalleled problem of juvenile delinquency and adolescent criminality. The home is re-

sponsible for a great amount of this delinquency. The loss to human society from the failure of the home to function as a Christian institution is to be compared with the loss from a great war. The purpose of the home is to produce men and women fully developed in body, mind, spirit, and social consciousness. Many homes are failing in this purpose because of the voluntary acceptance of false standards, while others are forced into conditions, mainly by economic pressure, that render the efficiency of the institution impossible. Therefore, one of the greatest problems of stewardship is to bring into our educational processes, and, in fact into our whole economic and social order, a consciousness of personal values, and the importance of the home in creating these values, that will lift the family to a higher level both potentially and actually for the performance of its duty. The well-favored homes must be brought to a deeper realization of their proper mission. The poorly situated home must have its conditions improved and also must be motivated for the proper performance of its work.

Has the Church to-day a more important function than the teaching of the principles that will keep the home in the forefront of all social institutions in the appreciation of its own divine mission?

As the ethical implications of religion, in the sense of creation of the more abundant life, are more clearly discerned, will it not be evident that disloyalty to family duties, even in the negative sense of neglect,

constitutes one of the gravest types of moral delinquency?

Should not the meaning and function of the family have a place in our program of religious education as important as Christian doctrine, missions, or any other topic of major importance and interest?

### Personal Responsibility

The family being the chief character building institution of society, it must include every member of the group in its program of development. In this program are embraced and blended in beautiful mutuality the elements of giving and receiving. The home is not centered in childhood exclusively. All members of the family need its influence for the development of their personalities. In the truly Christian home there cannot be a receiving group and a giving group, as, for example, the parents giving on the one hand, the children receiving on the other. Both must give and both receive. The principle of giving life in order to receive life applies here as in all other human relationships.

Probably it is not an exaggeration to say that the pleasure philosophy of life, so strong as a motive in modern times, is the chief enemy of the Christian home. Pleasure, in the sense in which it is here used, centers in the individual as a form of selfishness. The true function of the family is destroyed when any member of the group interprets the relationship in terms of pleasure. The husband and wife may, for example, forget the place of childhood in the home and center

marriage in their own wishes. Such a course is of necessity a failure from the beginning, even though it should bring the pleasure desired.

If Christian Stewardship, therefore, is to be interpreted in the sense of maintaining those relationships that make for the abundant life, strong emphasis must be placed on the responsibilities of the individual members of the family to the group.

## The Government

What is the government for? What is the Christian's relation to the government? Certainly the government, as well as any other institution, must be subject to the Christian test of values as, for example, the family; and this test is the ability to fulfill the potentialities of persons. Government is not something apart from life, to be administered in the interest of certain persons or problems; it should be an agency which functions to the extent of its power in the interest of the development of all the people under its authority. And the Christian citizen is under solemn obligation to use his utmost influence to secure the conformity of his government to the principles of his religion. The contention that religion should not be interested in government is no more reasonable than that religion should not be concerned with the family. Both institutions have great significance for human welfare; and the Christian religion cannot be indifferent to anything that has to do with human welfare.

*In a democracy government is the product of the corpo-*

*rate life of the people.* Their ideals, activities, and character united as a social unit create the government. A government "of the people, by the people, and for the people" was Lincoln's method of putting the democratic conception. His words are closely related in spirit to the "liberty, equality, and fraternity" of the French Revolution. In the last analysis, a democratic government can never rise above the character and intelligence of the people. True, in the constitution of the United States there are certain checks and balances provided which are designed to protect the government against the impulsiveness of the masses, but the protection is only against impulsive action. Seasoned national conviction will always have its way in the United States. Even constitutional guaranties may be altered by the process provided for the amending of the constitution. Legislative, judicial, and executive functions all ultimately inhere in the will of the people. Nothing is completely immune from the man who casts the ballot. Even the Supreme Court is dependent upon the will of the people; for the members of that body are appointed by the President, who in turn is elected by the people.

*Religion in Relation to the Democratic State.*—If autocracies have often felt that religion is necessary to monarchy in order to keep the people quiet, the citizens of a democracy may truly look to religion as necessary if they would become qualified for political activities. For in a democracy government sinks or rises with the level of the people, which renders necessary the exist-

ence of a potent spiritual power, able to inspire and develop those qualities of character essential to the functioning of the government in the interest of the highest possible good of all the people. These qualities of character throughout all history have been inspired mainly by religion.

True religion is essentially creative in the realm of persons, which makes its value indispensable to the life of nations, especially of democratic nations. Autocracies have believed in the infallibility of heredity. In such societies there have been groups thought of as governing classes, business classes, serving classes, *et cetera*. These classes have been considered fixed, in the sense that persons are expected, with few exceptions, to remain in the social stratum where they are born. But democracy and Christianity have seen great value in all persons. Hence early Christianity made of men of low estate a social, religious, and intellectual power that dominated an empire and changed the channel of civilization. The democracy of the United States also took a group of people, who for the most part were driven out of Europe because they were deemed incapable of choosing either their own government or their own God, and it made of these "hewers of wood and drawers of water" and their descendants the strongest nation that has ever been on the face of the earth. Thus the Christian religion and democracy are at one in the fundamental conviction that the masses of humanity are capable of great development.

## Qualifications of Christian Citizenship

There are at least three qualifications of a citizen essential to participation in the political life of one's country. These qualifications are *understanding*, *loyalty*, and *sacrifice*.

1. *Understanding*.—In a monarchy the rulers furnish the intelligence for the operation of the government. In a democracy, such as ours, where the people are fundamentally the government, *the citizen must do the thinking*. Democracy is founded upon the belief that, in the long run, the judgment of the whole people will be better than the opinion of a group. To make this theory of government successful the people must be trained actually to think, and think politically. Not aggregate ignorance, but aggregate intelligence, renders democracy successful. Moreover, there is no alchemy by which individual ignorance may be transformed into group intelligence.

One will grasp the importance of a democratic people being politically trained when the magnitude and complexity of the problems now before the American nation are understood. For example, charges of gross corruption were recently made against the dominant political party. Are American citizens to interpret this situation from the partisan viewpoint—the Democrats accusing and the Republicans defending? Or shall such a matter be settled by an intelligent public opinion without reference to partisan bias? Again, our problem of foreign relations will become more and more difficult, on account of the growing interdependence of nations.

Moreover, such matters as the tariff, farm relief, the industrial problem, and the race question all require interpretation and solution by public opinion. Is it not, therefore, gravely important that our people shall be intelligently concerned with these matters?

2. *Loyalty.*—Having understood the purpose of his nation, *the second qualification of a good citizen is loyalty to the national ideal.* Loyalty is absolutely essential to group stability. A nation is not an aggregation of individuals. To the contrary, it is composed of certain millions of persons congealed into a unit by fundamental group purpose. Moreover, *the founders of this nation were actuated by the one fundamental purpose of making opportunity and inspiration available for everybody, even the humblest citizen.* This may be taken without doubt as America's ultimate ideal.

In the Old World all forms of human life, political, social, economic, and religious, had been compressed into the mold prepared for them by the ruling classes.

But not so in America. To accomplish the purposes of the new nation the greatest possible liberty was granted to the individual in all phases of life. The principle that the government that governs least governs best was very generally accepted. The individual was not greatly restrained by law in the operation of his business. If he held property he had a right for the most part to do with it as he wished.

The nation was also isolated from the rest of the world. Therefore, it was considered inadvisable to be-

come entangled in world affairs. And Church and state were to be forever kept separate.

This fundamental interpretation of the function of the nation to bring the opportunity and inspiration for the more abundant life to everybody remains, and must always remain, the purpose of our country. However, the purpose of the nation and the method of achieving that purpose must not be regarded as identical. Great ideals remain the same, except that their meaning becomes richer and fuller as they become more and more a part of experience; but the application of these ideals to actual life changes with ever-changing conditions. Otherwise loyalty to a static social order would destroy all progress. The loyalty of a savage would thus keep him a savage always. And while, for the most part, the methods of our forefathers are applicable to modern conditions, it is evident that certain fundamental changes have come about wherein the copying of the methods of our ancestors might easily defeat their fundamental purpose. Therefore, we must place our inherited social, religious, political, and economic customs in the balance to determine whether they still serve the purpose for which they were brought into being.

Fundamental changes in social life render it necessary to reconsider the applicability of our inherited practices to our permanent national purpose. It being remembered, of course, that the national purpose is the abundant life for everybody. For example, the coming of the machine as a means of large scale production has

obviously rendered the old idea of unlimited competition in industry obsolete. The application of the old individualism in our present commercial relations would defeat the very purpose for which it originally existed, for the reason that under the old conditions the economic order yielded itself almost solely to individual efficiency and initiative; whereas at the present time combinations of productive power are so vast that an individual counts for little in the total situation. We have the spectacle of the conditions, once favorable to the development of persons, now being very largely reversed.

Moreover, a similar change has taken place with regard to the international situation. When the United States began its career as a nation the country was remote and travel difficult, and monarchies ruled the world. The only safe policy, therefore, was to remain aloof from world affairs while we were developing strength to take our place in the family of nations. At the present time, however, the world is a neighborhood; and most of the inhabitants of the earth are struggling for the same things our forefathers struggled for if, indeed, they have not already attained them.

Likewise in the matter of the separation of Church and State, it is perfectly apparent that, although this separation should continue, the State cannot endure without the moral assistance of the Church. A single example will make clear this point. The State is more and more taking over educational functions. But many of our foremost leaders realize the extreme danger of a

great educational program without religion being included in the process. Thus it becomes perfectly clear that our national loyalties must be interpreted anew by an intelligent citizenship, in order that our fundamental purpose be not defeated by blind fidelity to obsolete methods.

3. *Sacrifice.—The third and last characteristic of a good citizen is a sacrificial attitude toward the nation.* The citizen receives many advantages from the national group of which he is a member; and in common with all other relationships, one's relation to the nation must be that of reciprocity, or else the situation will be mutually degenerative. It is fatal to the high qualities of persons to receive benefits and then make no return in service. There are many ways, of course, in which sacrificial loyalty may be rendered to one's country.

*A good citizen will take the time and trouble to vote.* The privilege of the vote was extended to the people on the theory that the powers of government are derived from the people who are governed, the vote being the method by which the will of the voter is effectually registered in the policy of the government. Moreover, the right of the masses to vote was brought about by a leaven (chiefly the Christian conception of the worth of every person) that has been working in society for centuries. It must be remembered also that the Christian who neglects to vote, and according to the principles of his religion, is withholding a unit of power from the Kingdom of God in its effort to control human relationships.

If our democracy is to function efficiently, *the disinclination of many of our most excellent men and women to hold office must be overcome.* Some refuse to hold office because of the lure of lucrative business or professional opportunities, a privilege they are unwilling to forego. Others dislike to be associated in the public mind with the odious name of politician. But after all, the holding of public office is but the sharing of leadership in the processes that determine national destiny. Can a man who is in position to do so refuse to serve his country as an officeholder and still do his share in the promotion of the common good?

The application of the principles set forth in this discussion of government is one of the most important functions of Christian Stewardship. For example, the question of one's primary loyalty is involved. To what must the Christian citizen be loyal? Is he to be loyal to a political party under any and all conditions? Or has he a more compelling obligation located in the fundamental purpose of his religion? Certainly it must be said that the fundamental purpose of the Christian religion is permanent and worthy of the allegiance of all men who desire first and foremost the welfare of society.

The issue of the preëminence of persons raised by Christianity on a world-wide scale sets up a standard of evaluation by which the true disciple of Christ determines the merit of all governmental proposals. When, therefore, there is a conflict between the standards of a political party or movement and the Christian

ideal the true Christian has no option. He must be true to his religion. God has spoken, and there is no higher authority.

The study of governmental problems is an obvious duty of Christian citizenship. A citizen will function politically on the basis of his own conscience and knowledge; or else he will be governed by custom and prejudice or by the judgment of others. Custom carries forward the inapplicable condition of the past. Prejudice always vitiates good judgment. Moreover, when one acts as a citizen on the mere basis of another's judgment the very fundamental purpose of democracy is defeated. The study of public questions is as essential to good citizenship as is the study of child welfare to successful parenthood.

Moreover, the person who follows his own conscience and judgment, and who rates the obligations of a citizen high, will often find himself in conflict with his fellows; and he will also be under the necessity of sacrificing personal comfort and resources to political ideals. Thus has progress in government toward the ideals of democracy and Christianity always been achieved. The Christian citizen in his relation to stewardship in matters of government is in precisely the same position with reference to sacrifice that he sustains toward the Kingdom of God as a whole, or toward any other specific social relationship. He is an instrument in the hands of God to advance the Kingdom. The welfare of the work takes precedence over the safety and comfort of the worker.

### Topics for Discussion

1. What are the chief elements in the Christian conception of the family?

2. What influences of modern society are unfavorable to the Christian home? What influences are favorable?

3. Discuss the danger of mistaking change for loss. Is a permanent institution the same as a changeless institution?

4. What is the relation of the character of the people to successful government, especially in a democracy?

5. How can a citizen influence the policy of his government?

6. Is it a Christian duty to hold office? If so, under what circumstances is a Christian exempt from that duty?

7. What motives should control the casting of a ballot? What do you mean by a Christian country?

## CHAPTER VI

## THE FARTHER REACHES OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP—RACES AND NATIONS

WHAT are the forces now operating in human society that are capable of benefiting all men?

This is an important question, perhaps one of the most important of all questions before the world to-day. The broadening of the social consciousness has progressed to the extent of embracing the whole world. It is correct to state that the concept of the human family does now actually exist, notwithstanding counter tendencies, such as racial, national, religious and class antipathies, that threaten the permanency and stability of our human solidarity. The social problem of greatest importance is whether the idea of a united human family is an iridescent dream to be finally dispelled by contact with the supposed hard fact that essentially and permanently divisive forces exist in society; or whether, on the other hand, there are great forces that will enable mankind to grow unimpeded as a vitally knit organism into a fundamentally united group.

*Science and invention undoubtedly have a tendency to unite society.* A specific for a disease germ disregards our common human differences and groupings. Quinine has the same effect upon an African, an Asiatic, or an American. Typhoid serum is administered without reference to color or cast. A process for the extraction of a metal from a composite of various materials works

equally well whether applied by the hands of a negro or by the hands of a white man, provided that the work is equally well done by the two. A railroad train is the same thing in the Argentine that it is in Germany, China, or the United States. Likewise with the telegraph, the telephone, the radio, the printing press, or hydroelectric power. The great fundamental laws and facts of the universe operate without respect of person in nation, race, or caste.

### Does Religion Bind?

But does religion tend to separate or to bind men together? Is it a centrifugal or a centripetal force? Humanity now needs all the cohesive force it can get. On the other hand, any element in the social fabric that spreads discord and inspires strife is so counter in fundamental character to all the best that the modern world strives for that it certainly must be thrown aside as belonging to an era that apparently is happily passing away.

It is contended by some that religion has always been a bone of contention in society and that it always will be. The exponents of this theory see religion as a greedy type of fanaticism seeking to feed its appetite for power on proselytes from rival groups, which groups in turn find satisfaction in the same manner. Have not religions inspired innumerable wars? The fiercest cruelty ever practiced by man has often been the product of religious fanaticism. Human flesh has been fed to flames and wild beasts to sate the religious

thirst for blood. Is there any method of torture devised by the fiendish side of man's nature that has not been employed by religion to protect itself, or to expand its influence? Are not Mohammed's sword and Christianity's inquisition fresh in our memories? These questions are asked by men who doubt if religion, whatever else it may do, can ever be looked to as a substantial aid in the establishment of a united human society. Has the Church the courage to follow Christ in matters of relationship?

It is to be observed that the criticisms directed against the Church at this point picture the institution in contrast with the spirit of Jesus. This recognition of Christ offers the starting point for the defense of religion as the chief power to which humanity must look for a centripetal force to bind it together in actual brotherhood. For after all, so far as Christianity is concerned, when its so-called friends have employed it as an element of discord their interpretations have constituted a heresy rather than a genuine insight. The spirit of Jesus Christ makes no divisions between men on an ethnic, cultural, or national basis; he divides men only on the issue of good and evil.

### The Motive of Christian Stewardship

Therefore, the motive that prompts all attempts to fulfill our Christian stewardship in these wider relations of life, embracing such major elements as nations and races, are of the very greatest importance. As has already been stated, the contention of these studies in

stewardship is based upon the belief that the sole purpose of the Christian religion is the fulfillment of all worthy potentialities of all persons in all the world at all times; and that, therefore, any missionary motive at variance with this fundamental purpose of our religion is inadequate, and will indeed ultimately do harm.[1]

When we seek to convert the people of a non-Christian country, such as China or Korea, to the Christian faith, what is our fundamental motive? Is it to strengthen the Methodist Church, or the Baptist Church, or the Presbyterian Church that denominational pride may take satisfaction in the publication of an imposing array of statistics? Or is the fundamental desire to give the people of these other nations an opportunity to live a more ample life? In other words, is it our desire to serve in the most fundamental and the broadest sense?

Suppose our ecclesiastical institutions should never be any stronger as the result of our missionary efforts, would we still desire to carry on the work? It would appear that the motive that actuates the missionary effort of religious bodies would determine whether they are making a contribution to unity or to division in human society. It is, moreover, to be doubted if people anywhere in the world will be hostile to an unselfish service when once the friendly spirit has been understood. On the other hand, the ostentatious effort of one religion to supplant another is practically

[1]The reader is referred to the treatment of this matter in Chapter I.

sure to produce division and strife. But when Christianity takes Christ to any part of the world it is entitled to every assurance that it is making a contribution to the unity of the human family.

### What Christianity Offers

Why does genuine Christianity tend to unify the human family? For one thing, it offers to the world belief in one God, whom Christ revealed as Father, motivated by an infinite compassion for redemption. This conception of God furnishes at least three elements of great value for our present world situation.

1. The idea of one God is essential to human brotherhood. For God, after all, is our ideal; and until humanity has achieved that inward unity that comes from holding common ideals the outward unity about which the world appears to be so solicitous will not be achieved. For example, the ideals of Mohammed produce one type of civilization, and the ideals of Jesus Christ produce another type. Those two types will not live side by side in the world in peace.

2. Our belief in one God furnishes a common viewpoint by which all human values may be determined. The Fatherhood of God has been so often pointed out that the fact itself may fail to grip our imagination. Especially has the world, even the Christian portion of the world, been slow to grasp the implications of the idea. As a sort of blanket expression of a benevolent sentimentality the Fatherhood of God is generally accepted; but when taken as the starting point from

which the great problems of social life shall be judged it is too revolutionary to be popular. If God is our father, immediately we must admit that all men are equally entitled to the privileges and inspirations of God's world. The idea of favored classes, nations, and races must go.

Again, the Christian religion contributes the doctrine of an all-comprehensive brotherhood, which, of necessity, follows the Christian conception of God. And there are two motives supporting the brotherhood doctrine of Christ. First, brotherhood follows upon the claim that all men, sons of the same God, are equal. Second, humanity according to the teachings of Jesus is bound into a unity by sympathy, the strong being sensitive to the infirmities of the weak and gladly bearing their burdens. Both of these motives contribute to the Christian position on human solidarity.

3. The Christian idea of God is of great value because it gives to the world a God of redemption, redemption in the sense of the complete realization of the higher posibilities of every life. Human unity and stability will not be brought about by the crystallization of society, but by the progress of society. The converging of the paths that lead to the common human goal will bring the race together. Both the goal and the uniting of society, which itself is one of the chief elements of the goal, will be realized under the urge of an inner potentiality begotten in the souls of men by the presence of the power of that redemptive gospel that leaves no one without hope of the abundant life.

*The Essential Equality of Humanity.*—Science and Christianity agree that the races of earth are basically equal in native endowment. Christianity says that God has made of one blood all the nations to dwell on the face of the earth. "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus."[2] Underlying the whole Christian conception of human relationships is the profound conviction that Jesus is the son of man, and that the human race is so positively a unit in all fundamentals that it is possible for him to be described as the son of the race.

The first great controversy in the Christian Church arose at this point. The Jews wished to deny Gentiles the privilege of admission into the fellowship of the Kingdom on a basis of perfect equality with themselves. This was because the Jewish Christians had inherited the superiority complex of their nation; and they, therefore, believed that the Gentiles were of a lower order of being than themselves, and that their inferiority was not overcome by the fact that they became Christians. Paul took the opposite view, defending his Gentile converts against insinuations of inequality. The fact that he won the day saved Christianity as a world religion.

*The preponderance of present scientific judgment as to the equality of races in native endowment agrees with the Christian position on the subject.* If contemporary scientific thinking is to be believed, the human family

[2]Galatians 3: 28.

evidently had a monogenetic origin. That is to say, all the peoples now living on earth had a common beginning. They are branches of one family tree. Very few anthropologists now believe that the human species sprang into existence at different times and places on the planet. To the contrary, there was a place and a time when man began to be, and from that place he has gone out and possessed the earth. Differences in moral, mental, physical, and social status have been acquired since man's creation, due to the varying experiences he has had, including all forms of environment. The differences, therefore, are far less fundamental than that common basis of all human life.

Assertions of inherent racial and national superiority may be accounted for by two causes.

1. From the bias due to the common assumption the world over that one's own group is superior to all other groups. From the beginning of human history it has been Greek and barbarian, Jew and Gentile, Roman and enemy. There is scarcely a people to be found on the earth that does not consider itself superior to all other peoples. Naturally, therefore, when one people has judged another people they have assumed the superiority of their own life and ways and have concluded that the differences to be found between themselves and other peoples is proof of the inferiority of the others.

2. Belief that certain races and nations are inherently superior to other peoples is also due to too limited observation and comparison. For example, one jumps at the

conclusion that the white race is superior to all colored races because of the present position of the white man in world affairs. Four centuries ago the discovery of America initiated one of the most profound changes in all human history; and this change at first affected mainly the Europeans. The imagination was powerfully stimulated. New and rich continents, hitherto unknown, were opened for exploitation. The two Americas, with their fabulous wealth, lay open to the nations of Europe. Exploration, discovery, and conquest gripped the minds of participating nations until they went beyond these new continents, included Africa, and even sent forth the ambitious to possess Asia.

Science and invention soon came and furnished the white man methods for developing natural resources and also the implements of warfare that made the subjugation of weaker peoples comparatively easy. They could take by force what they wished; and when possession was established development followed immediately.

A third contribution to the power of the white race was the Christian religion, which made distinct contributions to the situation then before the Western world. It established a high standard of morals, essential to social development; it, in some measure, taught the supreme value of persons, resulting in education and democracy, which in turn developed the power of these Christian nations through the development of the rank and file of the people. The result has been that

the extraordinary vitality of European and American civilization has forced the whole earth to contribute to the wealth and power of the white man. Of the fifty-three millions of square miles of land on the surface of the planet the white man now controls forty-seven millions.

A broader perspective in time and space would give a deeper appreciation for the achievements of other peoples. The Egyptians, the Greeks, the Babylonians, the Romans, and many others have made contributions without which our own civilization would scarcely be possible. Moreover, Japan, far removed by race from the Nordics, has made unsurpassed progress in the past half century. The American negro also in seventy years of freedom has earned the respect and admiration of his white neighbor by the advancement he has made. Viscount Bryce said in effect that no other race has ever made as much progress in the same period of time.

Again, the Nordics have not always been high in the scale of civilization. The following statement by Julius Cæsar describing the Britons indicates the social status of our Nordic ancestry two thousand years ago: "The inhabitants of the interior do not sow corn, but live on milk and flesh, and clothe themselves in skins. All of them dye their bodies with the juice of a plant, which stains them blue and makes them look very terrible in battle. They wear their hair long. . . . Sets of ten or twelve have wives in common between them, especially brothers with brothers and fathers with

sons, and when children are born they are considered to belong to the one who first married the mother.[3] . . . Those who are ill of any serious disease, and those who engage in war or other dangerous occupations, either offer up human beings as sacrifices, or make vows to offer up themselves. They think that their gods cannot be appeased except by offering up life for life. They have public sacrifices of this kind. Some of them have huge wickerwork images which they stuff full of living men and women, and then set fire to the whole and burn them to death. They think that their gods like the sacrifice of thieves and robbers and other criminals best; but if there are not enough of them, they offer up innocent victims. . . . The men have the power of life and death over their wives and children. If a well-to-do person dies, his relatives meet together; and if there is any reason to suspect foul play, they torture his wives to find out the truth. If anything is discovered, they put the wives to death with all kinds of torments."[4]

Cæsar's description of our ancestors of two thousand years ago strikingly resembles our own estimate of contemporary savage tribes.

## Inequality of Present Status among the Races and Nations Obvious

It is beyond question that there is a very wide divergence between the cultural attainments of various peoples in the world. When judged from this stand-

[3]Cæsar's Gallic Wars, Book V, Chapter 13. [4]*Ibid.*

point the African savage, on the one hand, and the European, the American, and the Japanese on the other hand, scarcely live in the same world. Our conception of human equality embraces peoples all the way from those who cannot count beyond the number ten up the scale to the countries where illiteracy is negligible. This difference in status has a most important bearing on the practical administration of the affairs of society.

### Ways of Dealing with Inequality

There are three possible interpretations of social procedure.

First, *equality of participation in the control of society.* This position involves such questions as these. In an organization such as the League of Nations, should a small and backward country like Panama have the same influence and power as Great Britain? Should a country retarded in political development like China have the same power as a more advanced country like France? Are not these questions similar to the question as to whether the three-year-old son should have the same freedom and influence in the home that a twenty-year-old son has? Should all students in a university have the same right to play on the football team regardless of qualifications? These questions suggest a type of democracy that is not likely to be tried or advocated by men and women actually responsible for the administrative tasks of society.

Second, *the view may be taken that power is privilege.* Therefore, as one writer has put it: "The duty of the

white race is to farm the colored races." "Hewers of wood and drawers of water" are words that have often been used to describe the permanent place of the colored races in society.

The same idea often enters into interpretations of class status. "His father was poor, ignorant, and thriftless, and so he will be," it is said. The people who come from poor and obscure quarters of the globe are supposed to be like the country they come from. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" has been asked all over the world with slight variations in vocabulary. To a certain type of mind present social arrangements with reference to racial and national superiority are permanent. Inferiority of status is interpreted as deficiency of endowment. Hence, it is said, let the under dog stay where he is, for that is his divinely assigned position.

Third, *although certain races and nations are retarded in their development, it is believed that they are capable of better things*, and that it is the responsibility of the better developed groups to encourage the progress of the less favored peoples. Such was Booker Washington's position on the negro problem. He contended for the education and development of his fellow blacks, realizing the impossibility of their obtaining a position in society which they had not earned.

The spirit of the New Testament is committed wholly to the doctrine of interracial and international helpfulness. Let him that is strong bear the burdens of the weak is of the very essence of the Christian religion.

The Great Commission was a command to evangelize the world and to bring the world into the fellowship of the Christian brotherhood.

Many agencies in modern society recognized the right of poorly developed peoples to progress. The League of Nations, so ably advocated by Woodrow Wilson, in Article XXII of the League Covenant commits itself as follows: "The tutelage of nations not yet able to stand by themselves forms a sacred trust of civilization." Every year the Commission on Mandates, appointed by the League, reviews the administration of nations holding mandates under the Versailles Treaty. Such a system is certain to result in a better chance for the backward peoples thus affected.

On the other hand, an exclusiveness that refuses co-operation with all and aid to the weak for the building of a better world is out of harmony with the best social thinking of our time. Will the privileged peoples use their advantage in the present world situation as a means of selfish exploitation, or will they interpret their privileges in terms of trusteeship for the good of the whole? No more important question faces humanity.

The underprivileged peoples stand at the door of the world's opportunities and knock. Will the doors be flung open to all who wish to pay the price and enter? Certain it is that if the doors are closed a forced entrance will be attempted, and the peace of the world will be utterly destroyed. Moreover, the privileged peoples have a far more important function than defending their own authority. If they will set their faces toward

the task of opening the doors of privilege to all nations, to them will be the glory of initiating civilization's most wonderful epoch.

The Christian religion under test has been the most potent power in the world for the creation of a unified and progressive social order. It came into the world before science, a world that was flat, and the center of the universe, and where the revolutionary conception of cause and effect had not entered. Science with its great power has come, but Christianity has adjusted itself to the new conditions and lives more vigorously than ever. In the larger universe in which we now find ourselves, the Christian's God is conceived in more comprehensive terms than ever, and the appeal to worship is thus more profound and alluring. Philosophy has changed again and again during the Christian era, but the religion which Jesus founded still lives. Christ's message first found entrance into the mind and heart of the Oriental; but it to-day satisfies the soul cravings of the Occidental as well. An inhabitant of the forests of Africa finds God mediated in Christ, and the head of a department in an American university finds him revealed in the same person. The sage of India and the Hottentot alike find the more abundant life at the same fountain in Christ. No other movement that has ever swept across this planet has demonstrated the breadth of appeal that is found in historic Christianity. Neither time nor temper, nor race, nor class, nor creed has been a successful barrier to him who was and is the Son of Man.

The contraction of geography through science and invention has made of the world a neighborhood. The outstanding problem of modern life is whether the closer juxtaposition of races and nations means conflict or coöperation. Christianity and its child, democracy, have become so potent in the modern social order that the differences in social status between the various peoples will not be peacefully perpetuated. The retarded groups will struggle for what they believe to be their inalienable right to progress unless the better favored groups, in the spirit of the Christian religion, coöperate in the development of a world civilization with inviting opportunities for all.

### What the Record of Christianity Promises

In the past the Church has shown splendid adaptability. A crisis arose among the Christians of the first generation over the issue of whether Gentile converts should be required to observe Jewish rites in order to be admitted to Christian fellowship. The practical issue was whether Christianity should be a revival in Judaism or a world gospel. Under the leadership of Paul the gospel of Christ was offered to humanity without distinction. In the days of Luther the question arose as to whether the Christian religion should function in human lives according to the will of an overlord institution, or whether the individual person should be permitted to develop in the atmosphere of spiritual liberty. The result was the initiation of a liberal tendency in religion, which still makes it possible for many millions

to be loyal to the Church that would otherwise have severed their connection with the institution. The Church met the expansion of civilization, following the discovery of America, with a missionary program that has carried the gospel to every country on the globe. The vitality and adaptability of the Christian Church has made it the most potent institution in the world during every world crisis in the past two thousand years.

## The Forward Look

New conditions continue to confront the Church. The demand for a gospel that will satisfy the craving of the whole world for God under modern conditions is imperative. In addition, the problem of the relation of man to man was never so acute as at the present time. The unity of civilization on a democratic basis as, for example, in the League of Nations in contrast to world domination, realized by Rome and attempted by William Hohenzollern and Napoleon, is a major objective of the modern social ideal. That enforced poverty, ignorance, and degeneracy should be replaced by the opportunity of the abundant life is increasingly demanded by the best minds and spirits of the world. Moreover, it is confidently believed that an indispensable condition of the realization of these important social goals is a spiritual power sufficiently dynamic and cosmopolitan to inspire and regenerate the soul of the race.

The extent and gravity of the Christian's Stewardship is determined by the sufficiency of his religion to

meet these needs. And when it is remembered that Christianity is as cosmopolitan as chemistry, and as dynamic as life itself, the responsibility for progress that rests so largely on the Church is very serious. The Church has the organization, the ideals, and the power to lead the race to that state of society wherein shall be realized the widespread development of persons on an unprecedented scale. More immediate hope can now be offered to humanity by the Christian Church, if truly dedicated to its high calling of redeeming persons, than has ever been offered by any institution in the history of the world.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Why has religion so often been a bone of contention instead of a unifying agency? Do you see any connection between a religion of externals and intolerance? Is religious experience more uniform than the interpretation of that experience in creed or the expression thereof in ritual and custom? Can antipathy for anything other than evil be motivated by Christ?

2. Is strife ever necessary in human society? If so, when? Does not an ideal society contemplate the elimination of strife? Can a Christian desire opportunities for himself that he would withhold from others?

3. Name some of the outstanding racial problems of the modern world. What are the causes of racial hatred? Can you make a list of evils that have been caused by racial hatred? What contribution can the Church make to better racial relations? Discuss the racial situation in America from the point of view of the opportunity of the Church to help. Can you distinguish between social sameness and social equality as applied to the race problem?

4. What are the causes of war? Would the Christian motives of love and service if applied to international relations destroy war?

## CHAPTER VII

## THE STEWARDSHIP OF WEALTH—FOUNDATIONS

No discussion of Christian Stewardship could be at all complete without giving great emphasis to the importance of the place of wealth in the social order. The reading of the four Gospels will impress any one with the place which the consideration of economic values held in the mind of Christ. Jesus acquired no wealth for himself; and, so far as our records go, he gave no money to any cause. Yet money was discussed a great deal by him. There are, moreover, at least two reasons for the importance that Christ attached to the problem of wealth.

First, in this time as in all times, Jesus found people centering their affections on the things of the world, material and temporal things, and he wanted to give them the far view—the vision of the Kingdom of the Spirit. Their entanglements in temporal affairs were so engrossing that he feared for those who possessed much of the world's goods, lest they should not enter the Kingdom at all. He declared that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom. The rich young ruler went away sorrowful because he was unwilling to place wealth second in his scale of values. The Great Teacher was fully conscious of the age-old tendency of the favored elements in human society to resist change, desiring

that conditions remain static, lest in the confusion of altering existing situations privileges be lost. The far call of the Kingdom is apt to fall on deaf ears when people are satisfied with life as it is.

Second, wealth gives power over the lives of others. It is, therefore, very natural that one who came to found a Kingdom of love and service would view with the gravest concern any element in the social order that has an age-old record on destroying the spirit of fellowship and service and making men lords over each other, and with the type of lordship that thinks it more blessed to receive than to give, to be served than to serve. Jesus knew perfectly well that the holding of great wealth on the basis of the ideas current in the Roman Empire of his day was incompatible with membership in the Christian brotherhood.

### The Positive Value of Wealth

But wealth has a place in a Christian society. Jesus never sought to destroy the evils of wealth by the destruction of wealth itself. He sought rather to make wealth the servant of man. Christian people should frankly face the fact that the creation and use of economic values must be ranked as one of the foremost problems of civilization.

Are not our frequent disparagements of wealth, therefore, due either to medieval asceticism or else to foggy-mindedness? There is no consistency between the denunciation of wealth and the pursuit or possession of it. To condemn wealth and at the same time

desire or possess it is insincere cant. If one condemns wealth, he necessarily makes of poverty a virtue and should immediately pursue that ideal by the personal renunciation of property. The interest of Christian Stewardship is in the positive aspect of the subject, which gives wealth an important place in society and then seeks to control it according to the Christian spirit.

*Wealth Essential to Progress.*—Since man was given dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and all the resources of the earth, it is perfectly obvious that he should exploit these resources in order to secure the material wealth necessary for the support of his physical, mental, spiritual, and social life. And as it is true in the history of the race that the wrong use of wealth has been degrading, it is likewise true that poverty has been degrading. One of the chief evils of this world to-day is poverty. Large sections of the population of the earth still live near the line of starvation. Alas, every year thousands sink below the line and die, either from actual starvation or from diseases caused by malnutrition. Even in America, millions live below an adequate standard of living.

Moreover, we speak of capital as a necessity for the further development of natural resources, which is certainly correct. Likewise the widespread philanthrophy and other forms of religious effort over the whole earth, programs that are constantly becoming more comprehensive, require immense capital if they are to be continued. It has also been the experience of

the race that some sense of security from economic want is essential to cultural achievement. Therefore, when we criticize wealth are we not really criticizing harmful aspects of the use of wealth rather than wealth as such?

*Religion Recognizes the Value of Wealth.*—The earlier portions of the Old Testament assume a direct correlation between righteousness and prosperity. The book of Job is apparently intended to disprove the correlation between wealth and prosperity. On the other hand, our interpretation of the relation of right living to wealth has swung too far in the opposite direction. Sometimes we talk as if a good person is less likely to have this world's goods than a bad person; whereas the book of Job was merely combating the overstatement of an important tendency. That the Lord will take care of his own has been a religious conviction from the time of Abraham. There is certainly a perfectly rational basis for this conviction, for in giving the larger life religion imparts the virtues that will naturally lead to success in business.

The New Testament agrees with the Old in esteeming highly the value of wealth and in commending the virtues that lead to its possession. The meek are promised the inheritance of the earth. The final triumph of the faith over the whole world is promised in the fact that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess the lordship of the Christ and his principles. Paul likewise was very emphatic. He went so far as to say that if a man did not work neither should he

eat. That is to say, if a man is not a producer he has no right to become a consumer.

Sloth and waste are New Testament abominations. The prodigal's troubles began when he conceived of life as a way of wasting one's powers and possessions. In the parable of the talents those stewards that were commended went straightway and traded and gained other talents. Their Lord commended them for their thrift. The slothful servant was the wicked servant. The servant who refused to use his talent, and multiply it, lost even what he had. The New Testament recognizes the place of creativeness as an essential in worth-while living. The person who does not straightway create is lost.

Since the Protestant Reformation and the subsequent emphasis on the social gospel the tendency of religion has been to inculcate the idea that righteousness is profitable in this present world. John Wesley was a prophet of thrift as well as of generosity. "Gain all you can; save all you can; give all you can" summarized Wesley's attitude toward wealth. Probably throughout Protestantism to-day there would be little dissent from the statement that whoever makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before is a benefactor of mankind.

Historically there have been two positive conceptions of wealth that come down to the present time and enter into our present-day thinking. These are the Christian conception of wealth, rooting back into the religious consciousness of the Old Testament, and

the pagan idea of wealth, which was held by the Aryan tribes in common with other primitive peoples, continued down to the Roman Empire, and is to be found in force in modern society. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the discussion of these two theories of wealth.[1]

## The Pagan Conception of Wealth

*Method of Acquisition.*—The Aryan race, from which Roman civilization sprang, placed force as the basis of possession to the very forefront in its theory of property rights. Property was rightly owned by those who had the power to take it. In the earlier days of that civilization the property involved was probably a hunting ground or a fishing place; or if civilization had advanced far enough, a pasture land. But regardless of the stage of development of civilization the group that was able by force to take possession was regarded as being in rightful possession. The implement of warfare, a stone, a club, a spear, or a sword, determined ownership, and there was no appeal. So strongly did right by force impress itself upon the consciousness of this people that the lance was touched in court as a symbol of ownership down to the time of the Roman Empire.

When Rome was reaching out to conquer the world the same idea of property right guided the nation in her annexations. For instance, in the days of Jesus

[1]See Calkins, "A Man and His Money," page 38. The Methodist Book Concern, New York and Cincinnati.

Christ, the Roman had not the remotest conception that his power to dominate Palestine did not give him the right to do so. Likewise with all the other provinces. To his thinking there was no ethical question involved in bringing in foodstuffs from the outlying possessions for free distribution at home. These were conquered peoples. Therefore, extract from them, by force, whatever may be necessary for the subsistence of the home group.

It is true that the form of power by which property rights have been maintained by force has varied from time to time according to the stage of civilization and changing conditions, ranging from the club of the cave man to the sword or battering ram of the Roman legion, and on down to the submarine or high explosive of modern warfare. But the ethical basis has been very largely unchanged.

If Germany had won her "place in the sun," economic advantage would have been claimed by right of conquest. Even the Allies were similarly motivated; for when Mr. Wilson went to the Peace Conference he found his ideals of self-determination and justice largely throttled by secret agreements between the Allies—agreements as to the division of the spoils. One looks in vain, moreover, for the difference in moral foundation between a tribe that fights for a place to hunt and great nations that fight for a continent to exploit. *Magnitude of power and skill of execution do not lessen moral perfidy.*

As civilization becomes more advanced, *possession*

*by intellectual conquest tends to take the place of acquisition by means of physical force.* Where society is highly organized, wars are less frequent. Necessarily so, else their sheer destructiveness would destroy civilization.

Under such conditions men have attempted to outwit each other for possession. "Let the buyer beware" is a principle of English law that illustrates this point perfectly. If a merchant can convince a customer that an article is worth more than its real value, the fault lies with the buyer. But the ethical basis of such acquisition is precisely the same as in the case of the savage taking possession of the hunting ground because he can wield a club with more effectiveness than his competitors. In either case the welfare of the group is forgotten, and there is no recognition of a fundamental law of right based in turn upon the rights and value of persons.

This pagan conception of property was passed on by Rome into the civilization of western Europe and America. But before the transmission a very substantial contribution was made to it. The stoic philosophy gave Roman law, the law of property included, the equivalent of divine sanction. Hence it came with great force into our civilization.

*The Coming of Individualism.*—Again, the release of the individual from the corporate life of State and Church in that wide movement, of which the Protestant Reformation was a part, had a significant bearing on the status of property. Every age has some funda-

mental philosophy of life with reference to which all values are determined. This particular age placed the rights of the individual upon the throne.

The ultimate authority in religion was said to be in the individual. Popes are mere men, the value of whose judgments is determined by intrinsic merit. Every man is his own priest, for he has a right to come to God on his own account. Naturally the divine right of kings was challenged, leading finally to the theory of government of, by, and for the people. The individual citizen is the true sovereign. He, therefore, has inalienable rights in all fields of human life, such as in religion, politics, and in the field of economics.

This atmosphere was most congenial to the idea of the sacred right of private ownership in property. That is to say, aside from public welfare, it was claimed that there are rights of property that cannot be denied. Therefore, an American business man could consistently say "The public be damned" so far as the administration of his properties was concerned.

If space permitted, numerous examples could be given of the emphasis early Protestantism placed on the rights of the individual in ownership. Only two, however, will be cited. John Calvin opposed laws against usury. Also the right of private property found its way into the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion. "The riches and goods of Christians are not common as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally

to give alms to the poor according to his ability."[2] While one could scarcely find ground for the criticism of the contents of this article of religion, the fact that such a sentiment found its place as an article of belief in a great ecclesiastical organization like the Established Church of England is proof of the determination of Protestantism to emphasize the individual aspects of ownership.

*The Machine Age.*—That an extremely individualistic conception of property held sway over Western Europe and America when the age of machinery came upon the scene is a matter of vast significance to modern civilization. Before the coming of machinery the shoemaker was busy in his shop making and mending shoes for his friends and neighbors. He was a sovereign in his own small realm. If his work was good, his customers were assured, for no one could come and take his trade from him. Besides journeys were, as a rule, short in those days, made on foot or horseback. Transportation of goods was limited. Each community was largely self-sustaining, subsisting on the product of the handwork done within a radius of a few miles. No one had a right to interfere with the price of shoes or the cost of transportation. Indeed, there was no necessity for interference. Competition took care of the situation and secured substantial justice to all.

[2]See Article XXXVIII of the Articles of Religion of the Church of England and Article XXIV, Page 30, Discipline, Methodist Church, South, 1926.

But when the factory was built to make shoes, installing expensive machinery far beyond the capacity of the cobbler to purchase, and the machine could make shoes cheaper and faster than the old hand worker, a new age had come. It was necessary that the cobbler become an employee. He then sold his time to the shoe company.

Moreover, no community was large enough to have a sufficient number of factories to produce all the different kinds of goods needed in that neighborhood. Hence, for example, one community developed a shoe factory, another community manufactured garments, another pins and needles, and still another table ware or furniture. Exchange was necessary. Therefore, a system of exchange has been developed on a national and even an international scale. Thus there came into being also a vast transportation system, embracing the whole world. Fewer and fewer people owned the tools with which they labored, or controlled the facilities to transport their own goods. More and more people became employees. This tendency is still in process of development. No one can tell what the end will be.

The new system has in itself possibilities of efficiency that carries everything before it. The world's goods are now being made by quantity production. Vast corporations of wealth, that the imagination can scarcely conceive, are carrying on enterprises with a degree of efficiency with which the individual can never hope to compete.

## Significant Developments

Three significant developments have come into our modern industrial world as a result of the forces herein sketched that can only be enumerated.

First, manufacturing is now carried on by large combinations of capital and labor. The individual worker is out of it.

Second, transportation has also yielded to the same economic forces and has therefore produced a system that requires the investment of millions and even billions of dollars. A single railway company with lines crossing a continent is not great enough. There must be correlation of a whole national system of railways. So with ocean shipping. The Sherman anti-trust law is felt in many quarters to be antiquated; for it stands in the way of the modern world's chief god, efficiency through combination and coöperation.

The third and most recent development in the commercial world is the passing of the individual merchant, whose function has been to market goods to the consumer. Instead, there is rapidly developing the system of chain stores. This system appears to have elements of efficiency that seem certain to increase the number of such stores, which, in turn, bids fair to result in the elimination of many individual merchants, as the cobbler was eliminated a generation or two ago. It is said that one mercantile company in the United States is planning to open fifteen hundred stores in the different cities and towns, all under one general management.

### The Owner's Right to Exclude Others

Through all ages, except in certain primitive tribes, ownership has carried with it the right to exclude all except the owners from the use of their property. Therefore, if one own an automobile, a fishing rod, a railway system, or a steel mill, no one else can use the property except under conditions sanctioned by the owner.

Under the old system, when the worker could own his own tools of production and market his own goods to his neighbors, and when the public could protect itself against exorbitant prices and poor quality by turning from one local producer to another, the interests of society were well protected. But a new set of social conditions has arisen, so that neither the worker nor the purchaser of goods has the privilege of as wide a range of choice as he once had. Therefore, to admit the right of the owner of the tools of production, transportation, or of marketing to run his business with reference to his own welfare alone would produce the most serious consequences in society. The management of modern manufacturing, transportation, and marketing on a pagan basis would bode nothing but ill for civilization.

*The Pagan Use of Wealth.*—There are two elements in the pagan conception of the use of wealth that are diametrically opposed to the Christian ideal.

First, the pagan idea permits selfish ease and luxury. The call of need has no meaning to this philosophy of the purpose of our human existence. Therefore, it is

better to be served than to serve; better to receive than to give; better not to work than to work. Moreover, there is abundant confirmation of this interpretation of the pagan conception of wealth wherever the Christian ideal has not gone. The non-Christian world has no strong philanthropic spirit, such as ours, resulting in the building of hospitals, orphanages, schools for the poor, *et cetera*. The pagan spirit sanctions spending money on one's self in disregard of the needs of others.

Second, paganism emphasizes ostentation and display in the use of wealth. The luxury of the favored classes in society through all time has been proverbial. It is, therefore, not a thing inappropriate for a luxurious palace or mansion in which there are feasting and rejoicing to be situated near the home of squalor and misery. But true Christian social ideals forbid such practices. The closing of the heart against the need of others is proof of the non-existence of the Christian spirit. The pagan may spend his wealth for display; the true Christian cannot.

### The Biblical Conception of Property

*Jewish life was based on theocracy.* That is to say, government is to be administered under the direction of God. God made all things and therefore is owner and governor of the universe by right of creation. Moreover, this government has to do with all phases of life. To the ancient Jew the idea that "the government that governs least governs best" would have been

a strange notion indeed. To have claimed that there is any sphere of life over which God's power has not control would have been a defiance of the Almighty.

### Theocracy in the Old Testament

God-consciousness motivated by theocratic belief dominates the Old Testament from beginning to end. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" is the very opening verse of the divine revelation. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods."[3]

The land belongs to God. No human transaction has power to wrest it from his hands or to divert it from his purpose. "The land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine."[4]

Moreover, this fundamental conviction of the ancient Hebrew is the foundation of the Christian's creed. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth." This is God's world because he made it. The Old Testament tithe was an acknowledgment of God's ownership. It was really very closely related to our idea of the land rent. The soil belongs to him, and those who use it must pay for the privilege. The withholding of the payment is therefore to rob God, even as modern men are conceived to rob the landlord by withholding the rent.

The purpose of God in creating the world of material

[3]Psalm 24: 1, 2. [4]Leviticus 25: 23.

things was to furnish a material basis for the spiritual kingdom, wherein the welfare of all should be provided for. And in this kingdom there was provision for everybody. Unlike the Greek, who despised the slave and exalted the citizen, the Hebrew God had pity on the poor and made provision for both their material and spiritual welfare. The germ of Christ's conception of the more abundant life for everybody was clearly present in the Hebrew mind from the beginning. The parable of Dives and Lazarus would have been clear to any Jewish audience at any time in the nation's history. The large place of the poor and unfortunate in the teachings of Jesus is thoroughly consistent with the best religious thought of his own nation throughout its history.

*The Prophets.*—The message of the prophets of the Old Testament is largely a protest against the prostitution of the divine purpose concerning wealth. To them social justice and social mercy were of the very essence of true religion. They lived in an age that was diverting the soil and its products from the divine purpose concerning these things. The rich became richer; the poor became poorer. The rich added house to house and land to land. Ironically does one of the prophets assert that the rich were so land-greedy that they envied the poor the dirt on their heads.[5]

*Hebrew Law.*—Elaborate provision was made in the Hebrew law against the exigency of attempts to thwart the divine will concerning property. Hence great em-

[5]Amos 2: 7.

phasis was placed upon provision for relief of poverty and various forms of human suffering. If the poor shall never cease out of the land, then generous allowance must be made for them. Every third year a tithe of the crop was set aside for the poor. Every seventh year when the ground rested by divine command the poor were permitted to gather the products of the fallow soil together with the grapes, the olives, *et cetera*.[6]

The fiftieth year was the great year of Jubilee. All debts and obligations were forgiven. All the dispossessed received back their own. The bondman was set free. Thus every generation had its opportunity to start all over again with an even chance.[7] These provisions of mercy and justice were necessary where the divine sovereignty came into conflict with human selfishness, where God sought the good of all and the individual sought his own good.

### New Testament Conceptions

The fundamental conception of wealth held by the Old Testament is carried forward into the teachings and practices of Jesus and of his early followers. That is to say, in the New Testament as in the Old, wealth is interpreted merely as the means to an end. It is not to be thought of as something good in itself, either for luxurious living or as an instrument of power over others. The chief significance of the simple communism of the early Church is the fact that the Chris-

[6]Deuteronomy 15: 12 fol. Deuteronomy 15. I fol.

[7]Leviticus 25: 10–18.

tians were willing to subordinate their wealth to the common good.[8] The great passion for witnessing to the unbelieving world, together with the spirit of brotherhood that pervaded the Church, made property seem a matter of small consequence to them by comparison.

One discovers, however, *a fundamental difference between the spirit of giving in the New Testament and the spirit of giving in the Old Testament.* The difference consists in the fact that stronger emphasis is placed on motivation in the former, as is characteristic of the whole New Testament approach to life.

In the New Testament there is no suggestion of compulsion. The motive of love for the kingdom was relied upon to create a proper attitude toward the giving of wealth. When Ananias came to Peter and falsely reported that he had sold his possession and was giving the entire proceeds to the community treasurer, Peter rebuked him for lying, not for withholding. The great apostolic leader affirmed specifically that giving all had no compulsion beyond the desire of the heart of the giver.

Limitation of space prevents even a brief discussion of the emphasis that Christianity placed upon the social aspects of wealth through many centuries, even after the Church became a State institution under Constantine. For the apostles and the great theologians like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas never departed from the belief that wealth ultimately belongs to God and that

[8]Acts 4: 32.

the individual possessor is limited in his ownership by the divine will concerning possession. Not until the individualism of the Reformation period did the Church depart fundamentally from this principle.

### Social Emphasis in the Evangelical Revival

The Evangelical Revival brought again to life the ideals of a social religion, including a social conception of wealth. This change in Protestantism was effected without a return to the mechanical externalism of medieval religion. For scarcely was ever greater religious liberty and tolerance practiced than by the Evangelicals, and yet they regarded wealth, both in point of acquisition and of spending, as being subject to the condition that it is to be accumulated and used in harmony with the welfare of all the people. A few quotations of scores that might be given will make clear the mind and spirit of the leaders of this movement.

John Woolman: "Though the poor occupy our estates by a bargain, to which they in their poor circumstances agree, and we may ask even less than a punctual fulfilling of their agreement, yet if our views are to lay up riches or to live in conformity to customs which have not their foundation in the truth, and our demands are such as require from them greater toil or application to business than is consistent with pure love, we invade their rights as inhabitants of a world of which a good and gracious God is the proprietor, and under whom we are tenants. As he founded the earth and was then the true proprietor of it, so he still

remains, . . . nor can any apply the increase of their possessions contrary to universal love, nor dispose of their lands in a way which they know tends to exalt some by oppressing others, without being justly chargeable with usurpation."

Wilberforce said in rebuke: "Religion can claim only a stated portion of their time, their thoughts, their fortune, and influence; . . . the rest is now their own to do what they will with; they have paid their tithes—say rather their composition—the demands of the Church are satisfied; and they may surely be permitted to enjoy what is left without molestation or interference."

Wesley and Law were both emphatic in their belief that those who have wealth should reduce their personal expenditures to a minimum in order to be able to do greater things for the needy and for the spread of the gospel.

## The Present Situation

A review of the present social situation will convince even the casual observer that the pagan conception of wealth to a considerable extent still dominates the modern world. Money is one of the most fundamental causes of strife between races, classes, and nations today. That the love of money is the root of all evil is not an obsolete idea. It was largely for "a place in the sun" economically that Germany contended. Disturbances involving property constantly irritate relations between the United States and Latin America.

The value of Chinese trade led the stronger nations of the West to exact concessions from that country that now threaten the peace of the world. In the modern press there is much discussion of "treaty ports, extra-territoriality, tariffs, unequal treaties, foreign aggression," and so on. Trade is the foundation of the trouble in China. But for an economic question, the right to levy a tax, the United States might now be a part of the British Empire.

The problem of wealth is, and has always been, one of the most important ethical problems of the world. Neither religion nor civilization can evade that problem and live. Especially in this modern world where wealth has so multiplied, where social conditions are so complex, and where democracy is pressing the question of the welfare of the masses the world over does the problem of wealth loom before thoughtful people as one of the most urgent of all questions.

That society should permit the holding of wealth in such fashion as to injure or destroy itself is unthinkable. That humanity will forget the freedom wherewith Christ has set it free and drift into Fascism or Bolshevism appears to be very improbable, and certainly undesirable. There is but one way to avoid just such a leap into paganism out of which the race struggled at such tremendous cost. That one way is the way of free acceptance of the principle of Christian Stewardship both as to the making of money and as to the spending of it.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Why did Jesus so constantly warn against the dangers of wealth? Do the same dangers exist to-day? Did Jesus ever condemn wealth as such?

2. Can you enumerate survivals of the pagan conception of wealth in modern society? Do you know people who think they have an absolute right to do as they wish with their own possessions? Why can a Christian not live in luxury and extravagance in proximity to poverty and squalor? State ways in which superior brain power motivated by pagan ideals may thwart the Christian purpose for wealth in modern society. Discuss changes that have come into modern society as the result of the advent of machinery. In what ways has machinery rendered the old individualism obsolete? How does extreme individualism defeat the purpose of Christianity?

3. Give examples of strong nations exploiting weak nations for commercial profit.

4. It has been estimated that the earth could support six or seven times as many people as compose the present population. This being true, how do you account for the vast amount of poverty in the modern world?

## CHAPTER VIII

## THE STEWARDSHIP OF WEALTH—ACQUISITION

KARL MARX, several decades ago, wrote a notable book in which he advanced a theory which has since been known as the economic interpretation of history. By this theory it is meant that human character is determined solely by the economic conditions under which people live. The idea, of course, includes both production and consumption together with all other elements of the material environment.

The theory has been generally condemned on the ground that it is crassly materialistic. Nevertheless, its very exaggerations serve to emphasize an important truth from which we cannot well escape. The economic system of society, including the efficiency and spirit of production, the availability of ample subsistence for the average person, and the theory of the purpose of wealth held by the group, enters most germanely into the formation of the character of the people.

It is undoubtedly true that the total environment plays a major rôle in the formation of character. This environment includes a great many elements, such as climate, social ideals, religious customs and beliefs, and economic life.

The economic factor is very important, entering with great force into the formation of personal character and also into the creation of social ideals. For example, the employer who sustains a pagan attitude toward his employees, forgetting the value of persons in his quest

for material gain, is likely to be a very well-matured pagan in his general outlook on life. Similarly the laborer who interprets his job as an opportunity to get the highest possible wage for the least amount of service becomes personally incapable of participating in the highest value of Christian civilization. It is impossible for one to devote the major portion of his energies to the work of earning a living on a pagan basis and at the same time resist the impact of that influence on his own character. It is as impossible for a man to be impervious to the influence of immoral practices in business as it is to resist the personal ravages of immoral sex life. The term immoral, of course, is here used in the broad sense of any departure from the Christian standard of conduct. Hence, the man who pays low wages for the sake of high profits is immoral. The laborer who fails to do an honest day's work is likewise immoral.

Therefore, the frequent discussion of the stewardship of wealth as if it pertained solely to giving is very inadequate. If stewardship is to be thought of as being applicable to all of life, its principles must be related to the acquisition of wealth as to everything else that has significance for human welfare.

In the discussion of the pagan method of acquisition it was pointed out that force was the basis of the claim to wealth. Sometimes the instrument was physical and sometimes mental. Sometimes the instrument of force in acquisition was the club, or the sword, or the high explosive; in other cases the superior brain, outwitting and controlling others for its own benefit, took

the place, and takes the place, of physical force. The ethical equation, however, is not determined by the method employed, but by the motive involved.

*Is the old pagan conception of force desirable or even feasible in the modern business world?* Will the Christian spirit work in the acquisition of wealth? It would certainly be a difficult matter to convince the business man that he ought to pursue methods that will not succeed, although these methods might have the sanction of the most exalted ideals. "In business for failure" is not likely to be the slogan of many men. Such business would be self-destructive and is, therefore, an absurdity. If the Christian religion cannot show that its spirit is workable, it has slight chance of influencing the commercial world to accept it.

In fact, it now seems to be perfectly clear that without the Christian principle of coöperation, resulting directly from the doctrine of brotherhood, there is little hope of permanent business prosperity. The social consciousness is rapidly advancing beyond the point where the pagan idea of cut-throat struggle can make a show of plausibility as a profitable method in business. The waste of struggle is a net loss. It negatives progress in two ways. *First*, the will to produce is destroyed. The multiplying power of coöperation cannot possibly function under such conditions. The very genius of strife is destruction. *Second*, direct economic loss attends industrial warfare. In a strike, for example, production is usually discontinued. Even property, the very tool of production, is often destroyed.

The writer made a study of the business concerns in the United States that are attempting to follow the Golden Rule. This study was during the financial stringency caused by the deflation of the post-war period. It was impossible to find a company of the Golden Rule type that laid off help, lowered wages, or failed to declare a dividend. Undoubtedly from the strictly commercial point of view the observance of the Golden Rule was more profitable than its violation.

There are two manufacturers whose names have often been on the lips of the American people, whose philosophy of coöperation in business should be instructive at this point. When Henry Ford broke off relations with his original partners and organized a company of his own, he formulated certain business principles on the basis of which he launched his great manufacturing enterprise. From these principles he says he has not found it advisable to depart. They are as follows:

"1. That when finance is given a place ahead of work it tends to kill the work and destroy the fundamental of service.

"2. That thinking first of money instead of work brings on fear of failure, and this fear blocks every avenue of business—it makes a man afraid of competition, of changing his methods, or of doing anything that might change his condition.

"3. That the way is clear for any one who thinks first of service—of doing the work in the best possible way."[1]

[1] "My Life and Work," Ford, page 46. Used by permission of the publishers, Garden City Publishing Company.

Again, immediately after the close of the World War the Arthur Nash Clothing Company, of Cincinnati, showed a loss of $4,000 for the year. The assets at the beginning of the year were $60,000. By the close of the year the company's values had depreciated to $56,000. The lowest paid workers in the factory at that time received $4 per week. The prevailing wage was a dollar or so better per week, while some skilled workers earned as high as $18 per week. These sweat-shop conditions disturbed the conscience of Mr. Nash, who had spoken much of brotherhood and the Golden Rule in his war addresses. He, therefore, resolved to improve the condition of the workers even at the risk of loss.

In his judgment the first essential of improved conditions was a living wage. So he raised wages in the face of a four-thousand-dollar loss. The lowest paid workers were increased 300 per cent. The highest paid help was increased 50 per cent. The marvel of the outcome was that with an increased wage, averaging about 100 per cent, there was a lowering of the cost of production. The workers developed a new spirit, and the results in output alone vindicated the experiment. In five years the capital stock had increased from $56,000 to $1,000,000. The same workers and the same management produced this transformation. The difference was in the new spirit. The writer observed with great interest the attitude of one of Mr. Nash's employees toward his employer, who invariably spoke of him as "Brother Nash." And he *was* "*Brother Nash.*"

The writer has to-day had a conversation with a Christian man engaged in the wholesale grocery business. The chain stores are gradually eliminating his customers and, of course, the customers of his competitors (of whom there are eight). Several of these eight competitors are having extreme difficulty in meeting the new competition. This friend feels that, with the favorable financial condition of his firm, he could sell goods at a rate that would force most of these competitors out of business. He refuses to do so, however, because of the distress that would be brought to them and their families.

In Middle Tennessee two generations ago there lived the owner of a large farm. During a certain summer a drought occurred and the farms for miles around were parched and dry. Oddly enough, however, a heavy rain fell on this man's farm in time to save his corn, with the result that he had an abundant crop, while his neighbors had none. They came to him to buy. If they had money he sold at the price corn brought under ordinary circumstances. If they had no money, he lent corn with the understanding that they would return the borrowed corn the next year after they had harvested their crop. This Christlike attitude in business, like the deed of the woman who broke the alabaster box of precious ointment, is told as a memorial of him.

### Brotherhood in Business

There are two observations that ought to be made with regard to the spirit of brotherhood in business.

First, the chief goal of life is not selfish acquisition. Civilization is not for the making of wealth primarily; it is for the development of *persons*. It is exceedingly refreshing, therefore, to find men in business, in increasing numbers, who have caught the vision of the higher purpose of wealth as an instrument of good for all.

Second, the Golden Rule actually pays dividends. Coöperation is essentially creative, while strife and selfishness destroy. "One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight" illustrates the Biblical conception of increased power through cooperation. To the contrary, Jesus said: "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."[2] Although this remark was made with reference to the sword that Peter held in his hand, the sword may be taken as a symbol of strife; for strife is always destructive.

### The Three Elements of Society Affected

There are three elements in our modern industrial order that must be included in any just and lasting settlement of the problem of wealth. They are capital, labor, and the public. An injustice to any one of these will destroy the equilibrium of coöperation and will finally lead to strife and loss.

*Justice to Capital.*—That the laborer is worthy of his hire is certainly true. That the employer is worthy of honest work is equally true. The nation's capital is the result of the thrift of the people. There would be no

[2] Matthew 26: 52.

capital unless some had lived below their income, saved money, and invested it in the tools of production. Some who own this capital are worth millions of dollars; others are worth a few hundred dollars. Some of it belongs to active business men. Large sums in the aggregate belong to widows, orphans, and eleemosynary institutions, given to them by earners to keep them from want, in the case of dependents, and to carry on their work for the good of humanity in the case of institutions.

Unfairness to capital penalizes thrift, robs widows and orphans, and limits those institutions that exist for the good of human society as a whole. That the capital of the nation is owned by a few grasping millionaires, who go forth to prey upon the innocent and the helpless is far from the truth. Millions of people in America own stock in our industrial concerns. One corporation that comes to the writer's mind at this time has more than four hundred thousand stockholders. Scores of other large business concerns are similarly owned by large numbers of people. *Thrift is worthy of reward.*

*Labor's Part in the Industrial Order.*—Is labor to be an instrument of capital, or a partner with capital? No more important question is before the modern world. Is labor to be hired and fired at the will of capital, and in the sole interest of capital? Does such a policy not place material values above human values? Does it not also destroy the very soul of democracy? Is it the right of property owners to exclude all others than the owner from its use? In the organization of modern industry a single management often controls the tools whereby

hundreds of thousands earn their living. The workers, moreover, are usually skilled in only one trade and cannot conveniently learn a new one. This makes it quite difficult to change employers, especially in view of the further fact that seniority rights are also involved. A deeper sense of obligation to labor on the part of the employer than any purely individualistic conception can furnish is essential to real justice.

There is certainly need for the Christian conception of unity and brotherhood to supply the ethical background of our industrial life, to prevent the strife that would ultimately impoverish all. Capital and labor are merely different aspects of the single process that puts the finished product on the market. Any impairment of the creative sense of labor brought about by strife, misunderstanding, or the lessening of labor's sense of responsibility cannot do other than injure both elements concerned. Strikes and lockouts are proof of social disease. Happily strikes have decreased 94 per cent in ten years.

*The Stake of the Public in Industry.*—The public is entitled to consideration in all matters pertaining to the industrial situation. Moreover, the interest of the public is not limited to the price of goods. That would be an exceedingly narrow view to take of the matter, when elements enter into the production and distribution of goods that finally determine to a very great extent the weal or woe of all society. In the interest of self-preservation, therefore, the public cannot ignore industrial disturbances that disrupt its own life; nor can

it overlook inadequate wages or bad living conditions that would finally lead to the degeneration of large portions of the population.

Indeed, it seems a fair proposition to state that if society offers its protection to any group of people, labor or capital, it has a right to expect that its own welfare be made primary.

Can persons or corporations, in positions of advantage, controlling the prices of commodities, holding them for exorbitant prices, expect to be unmolested by society when they do not regard the welfare of society? Aside from any sort of social interference, is it not a violation of Christian principle and spirit to use the force of one's good advantage to extract exorbitant profits? In some of our centers of population it has repeatedly occurred that dealers will destroy large quantities of foodstuffs to force the price up. This is done with full knowledge of the fact that in that same community there are undernourished children by the thousand and perhaps by the tens of thousands. Can such conduct be reconciled with the Christian religion? Does a coal shortage justify a price that places heat beyond the reach of many when a fair profit could otherwise be realized? What is the ethical difference between the man who uses a superior brain, or a more favorable situation, to take the necessities of life away from another and the nation that takes from another by virtue of the superiority of a longer range gun and a heavier shell?

## The Duty of the Church

In the matter of Christian Stewardship the Church has a serious obligation in the modern industrial order because of the fact that the gospel of Christ promises a solution for such problems that will unite the seemingly incompatible elements into a coöperative whole. Of what value would the tools of industry be without labor? What would labor do without the tools, or what would both labor and capital do without society's protection and patronage? Christianity is, therefore, obligated to furnish the leadership and spirit that will render the theory actual: "The strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack."[3]

Jesus said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."[4] He also said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."[5] The truth that will make us free is certainly the truth of God's love; the Kingdom that we seek is evidently the Kingdom of God's love. Certainly one error, an error as old as the race, from which society needs to be freed, is the error that strife is right and necessary in human relations.

Moreover, again and again has it been demonstrated in industry that those who do seek the Kingdom of the Golden Rule have these other things added. Even the business concerns that put the emphasis upon service prosper and survive while others fall by the way. The

[3] Kipling: "Law of the Jungle." [4] John 8: 32.
[5] Matthew 6: 33.

writer displayed a penknife. A friend asked where it was purchased. When the name of the firm was given the friend said: "It is a good knife, for that firm doesn't sell any other kind." That firm is going into its third generation and is growing, while many competitors have perished.

### Generosity No Substitute for Justice

Human nature has frequently been inclined to substitute extraordinary virtue at one point to make up for deficiencies at other points. So some violate the spirit of Christ in acquiring and attempt to atone for the sin by giving liberally. The early Church, as the Church of to-day, faced the issue of declining ill-gotten gain. The Church of that far-off day met the issue by excluding the guilty party from membership in the brotherhood and by refusing to accept gifts from persons who had violated the spirit of Christ in their business practices. Jesus condemned the Pharisees who tithed so consistently that they would not omit the garden herbs (mint, anise, and cummin). This was because they were untrue to the spirit of brotherhood in acquisition. They devoured widows' houses and for a pretense made long prayers. Such inconsistency was horrible to Christ. He taught the truth that no service could be rendered to the Kingdom of God by such gifts.

The Old Testament prophets are clear and emphatic on the same subject, as will be seen from a typical quotation: "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea,

though ye offer me your burnt offerings and your meal offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."[6]

The modern Church faces the problem of receiving ill-gotten gain. The insidious wrong even creeps into the affairs of Church corporations. Nearly a generation ago, when civic-minded people in a great American city exposed horrible living conditions in the tenement district where exorbitant rents were charged for quarters unfit for beasts to inhabit, it was found that a very wealthy Church corporation was one of the worst offenders. A heavily endowed Church, receiving funds from such sources to carry on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in the world, was the limit of incongruity. The very prophets of old would rise to cry against such methods of Church finance.

Can a man, with any show of consistency, make money in violation of the Christian spirit, although the law may permit him to do so, and then come and offer that money to God? Zaccheus faced the problem of ill-gotten gain when he met Jesus Christ. So will any man. It appears not to have occurred to this tax collector that he could come into the Kingdom bringing his tainted money with him. He immediately offered to restore fourfold to any person from whom he had taken money unjustly, and also to give the half of the

[6] Amos 5: 21–24.

remainder to the poor. Then Jesus said: "This day is salvation come to this house." Many times the Church's message on the stewardship of wealth would be most profitably delivered from the viewpoint of acquisition.

### The Christian's Talent at Auction?

Has the Christian the right to sell his time and talent to the highest bidder? For example, in a large American city there was an extraordinarily efficient police commissioner. Crime had been driven out. Then a large commercial concern offered him a salary seven and a half times as great as he was receiving from the city, and he accepted the larger salary in the face of needed public service. A minister stirred up a great discussion in the newspapers by taking the position in a sermon that the commissioner had no right to resign, on the ground that exceptional fitness for public service obligates one to render that service, especially in view of unusual need on the part of the city for that particular service. Was the minister justifiable? Was the commissioner's decision consistent with the Christian ideal?

Another example of the relation of money to the call of service is that of a chemist in a large American university, who made a discovery for which he was offered the sum of $2,000,000. He refused the money on the ground that he was afraid of what the money would do to him, and on the ground further that the money did not belong to him anyway. He held that

other professors had made discoveries without which his discovery would have been impossible. Also that the university had furnished the equipment for the experiments and had thus made an indispensable contribution. He, therefore, gave all the money to the university to aid in carrying on further research work.

The great Steinmetz died with scarcely enough money to pay burial expenses, although his discoveries would have made him a multi-millionaire if he had desired to sell them for money.

After the strongest possible case for the value of money has been made out, the fact remains that many men are bound by the Christian spirit to forego the privilege of accumulating wealth, or else to seriously curtail themselves in that direction. Special adaptability along other lines requires devotion of time and talent to those other lines. Other duties, to Church, to community, or to family, will frequently require a large portion of one's time. Three brothers in Tennessee refused an attractive business offer, and refused on the ground that they were already earning a good living, and that the new enterprise would require neglect of family, Church, and community.

## The Importance of Christian Stewardship in This Area

Possibilities of economic development, far beyond the dreams of any other period of the world's history, are now stimulating an unparalleled commercial development. In the vastness of the enterprises carried on by

great sums of capital and expensive machines and by the aid of many thousands of workers in a single commercial organization, there is ever present the danger that persons will be lost sight of in the feverish quest for efficient production.

Over a greater scope, and more intense with strife, is the sharp competition between the nations for commercial advantage. Even continents are yet undeveloped, and more advanced nations are greedy for the privilege of exploiting them. So complex and powerful is the present urge of human society to create wealth that it is scarcely an exaggeraton to say that the most powerful incentive of present human endeavor lies just here. That the ideals of Jesus Christ should guide this world-wide quest for wealth is of paramount importance. In proportion to the need, moreover, is the obligation to meet that need. The Church, therefore, must address itself to the task of Christianizing the world's creative industrial order, with a view to keeping the welfare of persons foremost; for without that purpose the industrial order cannot be fully Christian.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Can you point out moral and social results of business practices? For example, do you know men who have departed far from Christian standards in business? Do they blend with the Christian ideal in other particulars? What are some of the evil results of poverty in your community? Do you see any relationship between poverty and crime and other forms of immoral conduct?

2. Is the spirit of coöperation a stronger creative force than the spirit of strife? If so, why? What is the meaning of "coöperative

competition"? Can there be competition in service as well as competition for profit? Do you know business enterprises that are succeeding better on a service basis than they could if stimulated merely by the desire for profit? Do you think the elimination of strikes would tend to raise the standard of living for everybody? Is not the occasion for industrial warfare passing away with the emergence of the social consciousness? Is not the laboring man more apt to secure the correction of abuses by an appeal to public opinion than by an appeal to force?

3. Should the Church accept money made in flagrant violation of Christian principles? If such money is accepted, what are the dangers to be guarded against?

4. To what extent would the need for philanthropy be lessened if Christian principles were generally practiced in industry?

5. Can you give examples of improved ethical standards in business? Can you give examples of pagan survivals in modern industrial life?

6. Discuss the social significance of the sale of talents to the highest bidder, as, for example, ability to write, special skill in a profession, *et cetera.*

## CHAPTER IX

## THE STEWARDSHIP OF WEALTH—GIVING

ANYONE who approaches the study of the New Testament conception of giving from the standpoint of money as something detached from the life of the giver will become hopelessly confused. For money is a part of us, an extension of our own personality and power; and only as the whole life is committed to the Kingdom will it be possible for giving to be consistent. "The gift without the giver is bare."[1]

The first call of the New Testament is for consecrated lives. Paul thought he had ideal givers in the Macedonian Churches. "Their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."[2] But the explanation of this unusual generosity is accounted for in these words: "First they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God."[3] Money as a form of power is so intimately related to the possessor that one cannot consistently give money without giving self, nor can one give self without giving money.

### THE SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE SIDES OF GIVING

Christian giving is on precisely the same basis as any other form of loyal sacrifice for the Kingdom. The educational principle involved is the same. That is to say, the giving of money is one of the natural outlets

[1] Lowell: "Vision of Sir Launfal." [2] 2 Corinthians 8: 2.
[3] 2 Corinthians 8: 5.

of the Christian's passion for the coming of the Kingdom, just the same as the giving of time, talent, or the utilization of relationships is such an outlet. Impression without expression is educationally unsound.

Giving makes two distinct contributions to the Kingdom of God. On the one hand, giving in the Christian spirit is a means of developing the life of the giver; and on the other hand, it is often the only possible way of accomplishing a Christian purpose.

The fundamental unity of life as conceived by Jesus, and emphasized in a previous chapter, is especially applicable at this point. Life to him was never divided into compartments; it was a unified process, enriched and developed by its own functioning. Therefore, only those persons that function in a benevolent manner can possibly be in reality benevolent in spirit and Christlike in character. The picture of the last judgment given in Matthew recognizes as meritorious only those social attitudes that are actually put into practice. For by such Christlike practice alone is it possible to have the spirit of Christ; and the spirit of Christ is the quality of character that orientates one in the Kingdom of God. The stewardship of giving, therefore, should be recognized as an essential part of the whole program of religious education.

Moreover, there is an important objective side to Christian giving. Entirely apart from the matter of developing the Christian character of an individual or of a congregation is the crying need of the world. Hunger, ignorance, disease, and unsocial attitudes curse

many hundreds of millions of the inhabitants of the earth. And no person can turn a deaf ear to these needs and still remain in the fellowship of Christ. The need of the world, taken in conjunction with the experience of the consciousness of God, constitutes the motive for Christian giving.

### A Standard of Values

Every great system of religion has had an inner unity caused by some supremely worth-while value around which the religion is organized, and by the power of which it holds the loyalty of its millions from generation to generation through the ages. Therefore, Jesus said: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God."[4] After that your other needs will be cared for; you will have gained the one thing that is needful. Every well-ordered life must have one "First." There cannot be two "Firsts." To Jesus, his Kingdom was the one "First." The making of that Kingdom the one great "First" in a person's life is sufficient motive for all kinds of good works.

### New Testament Giving Accounted for by New Testament Living

The marvelous generosity of the early Christians can be accounted for only by Christian experience. These apostolic Christians were absorbed by the great passion of their religion for fellowship and for the evangelization of the world. They gave because they

[4] Matthew 6: 33.

loved. They loved because they had tasted of the good things of the Kingdom themselves.

*Jesus on Liberality.*—"Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away."[5] "Sell that which ye have, and give alms; make for yourselves purses, which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."[6] The great concern of Jesus for the underprivileged, his tender compassion for the poor and needy, could lead to no other conclusion than that the fortunate should be joyously extravagant in giving to lift the burdens of the needy.

One is reminded here of William James's conception of conversion. He thought of conversion as a circle with a dot in the center. The unconverted man puts his own interests and pleasures in the center and God and humanity on the outer rim. Conversion is a shifting of God and humanity to the center and self to the outer rim.

*The Apostles on Liberality.*—The apostles consistently put God and humanity at the center. So profoundly impressed were they that wealth is to be made available for the purpose of the Kingdom that they both preached and practiced liberal giving. "But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God

[5] Matthew 5: 42. [6] Luke 12: 33, 34.

abide in him?"[7] "If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead in itself."[8] The humanitarian soul of Paul and the other apostles is revealed in their willingness to give both self and possessions.

*Apostolic Communism.*—The high-water mark of apostolic generosity was reached in the communism of that period. Three causes brought about that method of handling the finances of this small group. (1) They were moved by the very strongest and tenderest feeling of fellowship for each other. (2) They were absorbed by their interest in witnessing for Christ. From his own lips, only a short time before, had come the Great Commission to evangelize the whole world. Belief in this program had become a living, burning passion in their souls by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Martyrs' blood flowed in their veins. Gladly would they have died for the cause. Hence they were willing to give all their possessions. (3) Finally, they expected the speedy return of Christ; and they, therefore, had no motive for saving anything and every reason for spreading the gospel everywhere as rapidly as possible. The permanent value of apostolic communism is its evidence of their willingness to surrender completely everything to the program of the Kingdom.

[7] 1 John 3: 17. [8] James 2: 15–17.

Times and conditions change. A method that works at one time, mechanically followed at another time, may fail. So conditions have changed greatly since the days of the apostles. The Kingdom's warfare with evil has lengthened into many centuries of struggle and will no doubt lengthen through many more. Instead of the small Christian group living in the one city of Jerusalem, the Christian community spreads out through the whole world, thus rendering communism apparently impracticable.

Instead of benevolence being expressed, therefore, toward a few people, and that for immediate relief of need, the motive of philanthropy and religion is to redeem the whole world from squalor, ignorance, and sin. The method employed seeks the root of the matter, that causes instead of effects may be dealt with. But the spirit is the same through all ages. The Christian life is committed to partnership with God, through Jesus Christ, for the saving of the world. Our powers and possessions are not for luxury or display, but for service to the Kingdom that every person may have a real opportunity to develop his potentialities as a child of God.

*Jewish Theocracy Based on Solid Fact.*—"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." The natural resources from which our wealth ultimately comes were not made by any man or nation. God made these things that constitute the ultimate basis of wealth. He did not make them to satisfy anybody's selfishness. Our resources have been stored in earth, air, and water

through the ages. They are there ready for development, ready to furnish the material basis for a social order that will inspire all persons to drink at the fountain of the world's true riches.

## Other Reasons for Giving

*Society Makes Wealth Possible.*—1. Invention and discovery, without which wealth would be impossible, are primarily social in nature. They are social in a twofold sense. (1) In the sense that the profits derived therefrom usually do not accrue to the person making the discovery, but to persons who receive them as a social heritage. For instance, steam and electricity, taken together, are primarily responsible for the mechanical developments that have made possible the wealth of the modern world, and these were not discovered by men now living, or men who reaped great reward from them. Benjamin Franklin and James Watt have both been long dead, yet the product of their genius has contributed untold aid to modern commercial development. Even subsequent improvements in the utilization of steam and electricity have been made mainly by persons other than the ones that now profit by these great sources of power. Therefore, if wealth is to have a social interpretation at all, it surely must be admitted that those persons who have fallen heir to such sources of wealth are under the strongest obligation to make returns to society for the use of these tools of production.

(2) Invention and discovery are so dependent upon

past developments that, in the last analysis, every discovery or invention is fundamentally a social product. The man who uses the screw or the lever is obligated to men more ancient than Moses. The inventor, moreover, who works in a laboratory to-day will probably be using equipment made possible by the generosity of another, or, if he owns his own laboratory, he will draw on information that resulted from the generosity of benevolent men. The horticulturist who develops a better type of wheat may use knowledge of chemistry discovered in a university laboratory thousands of miles away. Knowledge that pertains to the creation of wealth is a unit, built up little by little, by the labors of a great number of men, working in all parts of the world and through many centuries.

The true type of social consciousness already controls some fields of discovery, as, for example, the science of medicine. When a discovery occurs, it is interpreted as a boon for mankind and not as a means of profit to an individual. Scientists in this and other fields have caught the vision of laboring for the common good. Scarcely ever is a great medical discovery made apart from the romance of a consecrated life. Excellent examples are available in great numbers, such as: Madam Curie, the discoverer of radium, or Noguchi in the battle with yellow fever on the Gold Coast of Africa.

Surely civilization, in its quest of idealism, will move in the direction of the more general recognition of the common good on the part of the people who lead the

world in the advancement of knowledge. It is still a far cry from the spirit of Madam Curie to the idea of a monoply on power sites for profit. But the world can never be Christian until public welfare is made paramount in the use of scientific knowledge, especially as that knowledge has to do with the production of wealth.

2. Society itself constitutes the medium of exchange through which wealth is made possible. Robinson Crusoe could never have been a man of wealth. Only as men live in social groups, where they can transact business with their fellows, is it possible to accumulate wealth. Just as knowledge is the product of social life, likewise wealth is the product of social life.

It, therefore, seems to be a self-evident proposition that the person who depends upon society for the very possibility of wealth is deeply obligated to render to society that form of support that will stabilize and develop it. This obligation cannot be met without the giving of money to those institutions upon which the welfare of society depends. It is said, for example, that the Rockefeller Foundation has recognized this principle in the giving of large sums of money for the public good. Mr. Rockefeller has for years been inclined to give support to the institutions of the southern part of the United States because, among other reasons, he has made large sums of money in the South.

Very frequently one observes the giving of money to a local community by a business man because he

made his money there. The very existence of the community enabled him to make money. He is, therefore, obligated to make a return to that community. Moreover, as civilization becomes organized more and more on a world basis, the obligation to give on a world-wide basis becomes apparent.

3. Wealth is obligated to society by the protection that it receives from society. Wealth is possible, not merely by reason of the existence of large numbers of people in a given area, but also by reason of stable conditions in that area. Revolutions invariably reduce a country to poverty, because in a demoralized society wealth does not receive the protection essential to its existence. If the government of the United States were to be overthrown, our national wealth would at once disappear. Troubled China and revolutionary Mexico are both poor and will be until society there furnishes adequate protection in the ownership of property. If, therefore, a man asserts that he has an absolute right to his property, he does so in utter disregard of social conditions that make the very ownership of property possible at all.

Moreover, no man can fully discharge his obligation to the social group, that does so much for him, until he recognizes that obligation by the giving of his wealth to promote the welfare of that group. It has been correctly stated, in this connection, that property would depreciate very greatly in value if it were not for the Churches. This is most positively a true statement. But other institutions also contribute to social

welfare. Certainly the schools make a very significant contribution to social stability, especially in a democracy, where the intelligence of the people must be relied upon, in large measure, to guide the affairs of state.

Eleemosynary institutions also contribute to the stability of society by aiding the amelioration of the lot of poor people, and others, who would otherwise be a lawless liability to the community instead of an asset. The discords of society are so often hatched in squalor. The writer's own denomination, in his own city, supports three social settlements, two for white people and one for the colored race. It is an admitted fact that social conditions have been raised to a higher level in the neighborhoods where these institutions are located. Moreover, a study of juvenile delinquency in the same city has revealed the fact that most of the delinquents come from those neighborhoods where the children's needs are met neither by adequate home conditions nor by institutions. Certainly every man who would discharge his duty to his community must study the situation with reference to the institutions that are making a contribution to the life of that community, and then give to the support of those institutions.

### The Motive for Giving That Jesus Emphasized

Jesus did not place his chief emphasis, in his argument for the giving of self or possessions to the common good, upon any benefit received from society or from any other source. That the generous person

prospers was never used by him as an argument for being generous.

However, Mr. Babson is undoubtedly right in his contention that true religion is conducive to prosperity. Russell H. Conwell also found that, of four thousand millionaires investigated, ninety-nine per cent were liberal in the support of public enterprises with their money.

But Jesus went even deeper than the reasons that center around social obligation in the sense of reciprocity between the individual and society. The principle of sacrifice, as exemplified in the cross to him, was sufficient reason for giving all for the aid of the Kingdom. The cross was so all-consuming in his thought that he believed it would furnish a sufficient incentive to his true followers to sacrifice to the utmost even as he was willing to sacrifice, that the more abundant life might come to every member of society. The challenge was flung out to the whole Christian community to count both life and possessions as assets of the program of the Kingdom for the extension of its power and usefulness in the world. By virtue of his love for the cause for which Christ died, the Christian is debtor to all men. It is not necessary that he seek another motive when he already has one sufficient to make the consecration of his resources complete.

The wisdom of Christ's chief emphasis appears in the light of the need of the world. More than half of the population of the whole world is illiterate. That one fact alone bars the greater portion of the present

generation from all possibility of ever in this world fully realizing for themselves the Christian purpose for persons. Even in the United States, with all our prosperity, there is a considerable percentage of illiteracy. Many not classed as illiterate are insufficiently educated to really participate in the world's wealth of culture. Can America call herself fully civilized when, with all of our wealth, the best school facilities are not available for all children? A family is judged as being below a worthy standard in point of culture when in its budget of expenditures it makes abundant allowance for luxuries and scant allowance, by comparison, for the cultivation of the minds and spirits of the family group. Should not a community be judged by the same standard employed in judging families? In the expenditure of funds we often act as if our bodies were in point of value far beyond the soul. The words of stern old Carlyle rebuke us still, both as individuals and as society, when he described his own day as "soul dead; stomach much alive."

Disease blights the life of millions, even in the case of those diseases that science knows how to control. Malaria devitalizes millions in America alone. Tuberculosis takes a fearful annual toll. There is scarcely a commonwealth in the United States that adequately cares for its tubercular victims. These unfortunate people are denied admittance to tubercular sanitariums because of insufficient room, thus losing their chance to live and also becoming an infection center for others. Cholera still rages in many sections of the world; and

who could number the diseases that thwart the Christian purpose of life? Besides, insanitary living conditions the world over, America included, rob large numbers of the opportunity of health and happiness that others, no more important in the sight of God, receive. The Christian Church should challenge the world with the moral problem involved in the fact that the scientific knowledge to control many diseases already exists, and the money to pay for the utilization of this knowledge also exists, yet the people die of those diseases that might thus be controlled.

The evils more generally recognized as belonging to the moral and spiritual realm still retard the development of the possibilities of human life. In this category should be placed hatred, suspicion, selfishness, exploitation, and many others, whose ramifications, like the roots of a cancer, extend with death-dealing power through the body of society to curse and destroy. We often perform our daily tasks as if evil could exist in society, affecting the very moral fiber and outlook of men, without society finally being called upon to reap according to its sowing, as if nations could hate without incurring risk of war, or as if strife and suspicion could exist between classes and races without limiting the possibility of high social efficiency. Can evil passion dominate persons without thus limiting the realization of the potentialities of life?

As the need of the world, the ignorance, the disease, the famine, and the sin are realized, the call of Christ to obey the impulse implicit in the life of the cross be-

comes more and more compelling. Will we be willing to give sacrificially to put hospitals at the disposal of the human family? Shall the percentage of illiteracy be greatly reduced in the next generation all over the world by the investment of large sums of money in education? Are we in the interest of economy going to allow the country Church to die out and rural life in America thus to become paganized? Shall those who have plenty look to the welfare of their own children and neglect the children of underprivileged families? Shall we allow famine in China to go unnoticed? Can we lie down and sleep in peace, surrounded by plenty, while our fellows starve in other parts of the world? Is the possession of a world gospel not an obligation to give that gospel to the world? Surely in the face of such needs all over the world the Christian cannot do otherwise than give sacrificially of his means, even as Christ gave his own life blood, that the world might be saved.

### Does the Church Ask for too Much Money?

The answer to this question depends upon what the Church proposes to do with the money given. If it is to be an institution on the order of a social club, that people join for conventional reasons, an institution that gives a respectable burial when we die, and marries and baptizes our children because such rites as a rule are performed by ecclesiastical institutions among the better classes; if these conventional functions constitute the sole mission of the Church, then perhaps the

Church asks for too much money. But if we are to be partners with Jesus Christ in the saving of the world our giving at the present time is still very inadequate.

The Christian is called upon to discriminate at this point. To say that a certain percentage of one's income should be given to the Church, regardless, is hardly convincing. The amount that one should give to the Church, or to any other institution, depends upon what the Church expects to do. If the Church is going to send the healing, the teaching, and the evangelistic message and ministry of Jesus out to the whole world, to the foreign land, to the rural section, and to the slum, then we do not give enough. That we should strike a bargain with God on how little we can give proves an inadequate understanding of the real meaning of the Christian call to sacrificial service. The true Christian asks how much, not how little, he can give. John Wesley lived on twenty-eight pounds and gave two when he received thirty pounds per year. When he received a hundred and fifty pounds per year he still lived on the twenty-eight, and gave the balance to the work of the Kingdom.

The Church has been too long apologetic about asking that its people be generous. Is the Church asking for money? Certainly it is; and it will always be asking for money so long as there is human need, and the spirit of Christ lives in the Church. Religion is not an easy convenience. It is life's greatest challenge, both in the sense of the magnitude of its program, and also in the call to sacrifice that it makes to all disciples.

The Church offers no easy way, nor can it do so. It is an institution of martyrs and heroes. Most of the men who wrote the New Testament, or dared to follow Christ in the first century, finally wore the martyr's crown. When we as Christians try to live a life of ease, without sacrifice for the cause, we are attempting to unite incompatibles. A life of ease does not suit men of heroic mold. The true Church can never be without a challenge of sacrificial living for its people. And this challenge must include giving as one of its most important elements.

### Topics for Discussion

1. How is money related to personality? Is it possible for the person to be consecrated to the Kingdom and the possessions withheld? Can a man love his family and at the same time deny them financial support? Does not the same principle apply to one's attitude toward the Church?

2. What contributions are made to the character of a giver by his own liberality when his giving is according to the spirit of Christ?

3. Make a list of human needs in your local community, in your own nation, and in the world at large to which the Christian should give. What will happen to the Christian's own religious life if he refuses to give?

4. Make a list of worthy causes that you cannot aid practically except through giving. How, for example, could the average Church member otherwise aid a hospital in China?

5. What would be your opinion of a Church classed as a Christian institution that did not fully inform its constituency as to the needs of the world and then set up an organization to meet that need? Can you name a denomination that has refused to heed the call of the world's need? If so, what of its success?

6. Can a selfish person enter the Kingdom of God?

7. Can a selfish person be a good citizen?

8. Make a list of the benefits that you receive from society.

9. What institutions contribute to the stability and progress of society? What contribution do you make to those institutions? Can one withhold support from those institutions and not be a social parasite?

10. Discuss the motive for giving most emphasized in the New Testament.

## CHAPTER X

## CHRISTIANITY MEETING THE WORLD'S NEED

In chapter two there was some discussion of the influence of religion, both Christian and Jewish, on the world during the extra fruitful periods of our religious history. The discussion in that chapter was for the purpose of discovering an adequate motive for stewardship in the light of what had actually succeeded in practice. The purpose of this chapter is to present the ideals and achievements of the Christian religion, more especially the achievements, with a view to convincing the man who honestly wants to serve his generation that Christianity on the basis of its record is worthy of his loyal support.

### A Satisfying God

Every logical discussion of Christianity's service to the world must begin with the idea of God which it sets forth. Any other approach would be as an inverted pyramid. Even if our sole interest were in the social effect of the gospel, *that* interest cannot be accounted for except through the Christian experience of God in Christ. Moreover, it is altogether probable that if the interest of the world in the Christian interpretation of God were to die out the ideals of Christian brotherhood would cease also. When the cause of a great effect is removed it is to be expected that the effect will cease to

be. Moreover, the religion that satisfies humanity's desire for God has thereby rendered the greatest possible service to the race.

*The record of Christianity on satisfying the soul's need of God is one of its chief claims to loyalty.* At the dawn of history man is silhouetted against the horizon standing by a smoking altar. Through almost endless ages the bounds of his soul were deepened and broadened. Finally he was able to receive the message of Jesus Christ, a message motivated by a pure, unadulterated, radiant, enriching, and perfect consciousness of God as Father. When Jesus said, "I and the Father are one," he proclaimed the world's foremost religious discovery.

So-called practical religion as an end in itself is unchristian; and is, in fact, a psychological contradiction. The man who is willing to accept God, not because of his love for the supreme being, but because he sees in him a social utility, destroys the very tap root of religious experience, and finally of religious service. "Thou shalt *worship* the Lord thy God" is the language of religion. To attempt to worship God with one's eye on profits to be derived therefrom is utterly at variance with an age-old experience in matters of religion.

One's own highest sense of values will teach him that the conscious relation of God to the soul is the highest of all religious values. To exalt God for what one can get out of him is on the same basis as praising a man for benefits desired. No man ever understood God who regarded him merely as something useful. The problem of man's sense of sin is still real. That the Church

increases the value of real estate does not satisfy this need. The social service committee of the Church of which the writer is pastor secured a good job for a man without work. Later the man's daughter, who had gone astray, was reported to have committed suicide. The pastor could not go to this father and mother in distress and say: "Take comfort. See what a good job the Church found for you." They needed a very different service from the Church. That other service was also important. Sin, grief, the divided personality, doubt, the sense of futility, death, and immortality are perpetual problems of human life. The Church is best suited to serve these needs.

The region of the human soul was the Church's first area of service. Christianity rather than being this or that specific thing is the inside of everything. "In the beginning God" suggests the sequence of Christ's approach to all problems. The Church's treasury is its historic and living experience of God in Jesus Christ.

All around the world to-day the Church is engaged in the task of restoring the souls of men. Hundreds of millions of people receive this service. And when the Church lays claim to the sacrificial loyalty of people, that it may continue to serve, no contribution that it makes should be ranked equal to its power to mediate the living Word of God to men.

### The Gift of Insight

A significant insight has been the beginning of every great movement in human progress. It was so with the

prophets and with the beginning of the great American republic. Likewise deep religious insight inspired Plato's "Republic" and More's "Utopia." But the most significant insight of all was the vision of the Kingdom of God that illumined the mind and soul of the Christ.

The insight of Jesus rooted back into the union of his person with the life of God, and the branches that grew from that rooting extended out to the whole earth. There came from that divine union an energy that broke through the social, political, and religious forms of that day and revealed to the world new and fresh reality. Old authorities lost their power. The taboos and ostracisms that had separated humanity into hostile groups of race, nation, class, and religion were swept away. Clearly did Christ see the infinite value of every person because all were sons of God. Clearly did Christ see that the person was of more value than any institution. Hence institutions that served as petitions to divide the brotherhood were to be destroyed—"till not one stone should be left upon another."

A new prophecy indeed had come into the world. It was new especially in the sense that the power of fulfillment inhered in the prophet's own person.

The incarnation of God in Christ, the sole purpose of which was the complete salvation of every person in body, mind, spirit, and social relations, was nothing more nor less than the release of omnipotence among men. Less than the presence of God's very life could

never have done with plain Galilean peasants what Christianity did do with primitive Christians. And all of that tremendous energy was consecrated to the task of delivering human beings from suffering, limitation, and repression; to the service of bringing the abundant life of God to all men; and to binding men into a society of brothers.

### Appeal First to Persons

The appeal to Christianity was first to individuals for at least three reasons. First, the person is the cell of salvation in the Christian scheme. Second, the number of early Christians was insufficient to enable them to influence governments and other social institutions. Third, the life of the early Christian community was too unstable to permit the development of philanthropic institutions. They were for the most part poor. Besides, persecutions rendered the permanency of their residence very uncertain. Any property that they might have held undoubtedly would have been confiscated.

But Apostolic Christianity had two characteristics that destined it for world affairs. First, it had the power of rapid multiplication. Notwithstanding the hardships involved in becoming a Christian in those days, multitudes came into the Church because the gospel had begun to transform their lives into conformity with itself. And these accessions came in large part out of the dark mass of paganism. Second, life-giving devotion and enthusiasm were quickened in the lives of the

converts—an indispensable condition of progress, especially in a new movement.

### Broader Contacts

The very nature of Christianity made conflict with pagan society inevitable. First, the fiery enthusiasm, the living, burning realism of these awakened men made them aggressive. They were not of the apathetic type of ecclesiastical manipulators, satisfied to lose the best part of a program for the sake of peace. Second, they were heroic and unselfish. They had potentially died with Christ already. They were literally willing to give their lives for the cause. Third, heroic enthusiasm was thwarted in its purpose by pagan institutions and practices. They were sent to save life. Paganism was destroying life. There were no nicely defined areas of Church authority and political prerogative. They were out to save men, and they meant to do it at any cost. Conflicts were, therefore, numerous and far-reaching.

*The Church Interested in Humaneness.*—First, we find early Christianity in conflict with the amusements of the times. Moreover, this conflict was not motivated by asceticism, but by a sense of human values. The arena where the gladiatorial shows were given will serve as a good example of the sacrifice of the welfare of persons. It was the center of outdoor sports for Rome and the climax of disregard for life.

At the opening of the Colosseum, during the reign of Titus, five thousand animals were slain in one day. Ten thousand gladiators and prisoners were thrown into

mortal combat during one celebration. For comedy, blindfolded men, and even cripples and dwarfs, were forced to fight in the arena.

It might be asserted that one of the first prohibition laws ever inspired by the Christian religion was decreed by Emperor Constantine against gladiatorial shows. Before his conversion he furnished both men and animals for the sport. After his conversion he said: "Bloody spectacles in our present state of tranquillity and domestic peace do not please us; therefore we order that all gladiators be prohibited from carrying on their profession."

Second, Christianity exhibited great interest in the poor and unfortunate. For example, no public hospitals ever existed in the world before the coming of Christianity. From the beginning Christians were greatly interested in the sick and had much to say about their visitation and relief. In the year 325 A.D., the Council of Nice ordered that hospitals be founded in all principal towns.

Pagan Rome provided a few small hospitals for slaves, gladiators, and soldiers. The masses were left without hospitalization. Christianity started hospitals for the public, including asylums for lepers and the insane—the first of their kind in the whole history of the world.

From the first, Christians administered to the sick, both friend and foe. On several occasions, in time of plague, the pagan helpers fled for safety, while Christians risked their lives to administer to the sick and bury the dead. Often these kindnesses were shown to pagan

persecutors; and even immediately after a period of persecution.

The Christians were the first to provide asylums for fallen women and their children. Not only is this practice true of ancient civilizations, but of modern times as well.

"The Magdalen Asylums are the fruits of Christianity. The redemption of fallen women, and the rescue of their innocent children, were never conceived by pagan religions and philosophies. The words of hope, spoken by Christ to the harlot, 'Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more,' have borne much fruit. Christianity is the only religion that ministers to fallen women, seeks their redemption to a life of chastity and honor, and opens for them the vision of a merciful God."[1]

Similarly Christianity from the beginning has been interested in the orphan, the widow, and the poor. The first officials ever appointed by the apostles were delegated to look after the needs of the poor.[2]

This early Christian interest in unfortunates continued through the centuries. Medieval Christianity, in conflict with one of the world's most brutal ages, fought a good fight for charity and kindness to the unfortunate, while John Wesley, the moving spirit of the Evangelical Revival, has been called the father of modern philanthrophy. Certainly so splendid was

[1]Eldridge: "Christianity's Contribution to Civilization," page 241. Cokesbury Press.

[2]Acts 6: 1-7.

Wesley's insight into the needs of the poor that it may be said that he more than any other man of his century reproduced the apostolic conception of human value and the early Christian insight into methods of aiding persons to develop.

In modern times the part that Christianity is playing in meeting the needs of the unfortunates of the world is beyond computation. This work is done both directly through the Church and indirectly through other institutions closely related to the Church—and through individuals inspired by the Church.

*The Church Opposed to Oppression and Cruelty.*—Among all the oppressive elements of human society *slavery has been the most inhuman and the most degrading.* In the Roman Empire at the time of Christ there were from sixty to seventy-five millions of such persons. They were gathered from all parts of the world by the Romans in their conquests.

The fundamental fact about the slave was that he was property at the disposal of the will of his master. If the master wished to be kind, he might do so. If he wished to mutilate or kill the slave for any cause, he had that privilege and was not required to account to any one for his conduct. Slavery was a horrible running sore in the very soul of the empire.

From the outset Christianity instinctively felt that its purpose to redeem persons was being thwarted by this dreadful institution. Although the ultimate remedy (absolute freedom) may not have been clearly seen from the first, Christians did immediately begin to

mitigate the hard lot of the slave. And from that far-off day until the emancipation proclamation by Abraham Lincoln the voice of the Church was never silent when the interest of the bondman was at stake.

Christianity's insight revealed the fact that a slave is a person, not a beast. Hence he is to be treated as a son of God and a brother. The slave was from the beginning received into the fellowship of the Church. Although at first the Christian community was too weak to influence the government, it did set standards for its own people. Therefore harsh treatment of a slave by a Christian master was punished by expulsion from the Church.

By the time of Constantine in the fourth century much legislation had been enacted in the interest of more humane treatment of the slave.

Slavery was eliminated from Europe largely under the influence of the Church. This good work was for the most part finished by the end of the fifteenth century. For example, slavery was outlawed in Sweden by King Ericsson in 1335. He gave as his motive the honor of the Virgin Mary and the salvation of his father and mother.

In England opposition to slavery came mainly from religious people. Such names as these will always be remembered in the history of the struggle for emancipation: Baxter, Paley, John Wesley, Whitefield, Granville, and Wilberforce. Through the influence of these, and other persons of similar sentiments, slavery was abol-

ished in England in 1807. By 1833 slavery was virtually extinct in the British Empire.

Similarly in the United States of America churchmen furnished the leadership that finally resulted in the passing of slavery. Although the manner in which emancipation was consummated was most unfortunate, such names as Garrison and Beecher suggest a long list of distinguished leaders whose influence happily disposed of slavery on this continent altogether.

Many chapters might be written on the influence of Christianity on the lot of prisoners, the sanctity of childhood, and the rights of women. But suffice it to say that in these areas of human life also the insight of Christ into the value of persons has gradually improved the lot of these elements of society.

*Under the influence of Christian emperors, such as Constantine, the lot of the prisoner was greatly improved.* The more terrible cruelties were forbidden. Better sanitation was provided. The sexes were separated. These reforms were motivated by religion in those days. And to-day that same religion labors for the same class. John Howard, the father of modern prison reform, was motivated by the Evangelical Revival.

In the days of the Roman Empire it was a great forward step in the interest of childhood to forbid the exposing of children and their sale into slavery. But conditions have gradually improved until the Church and civilization of to-day place the child in the midst.

*Education.*—Christianity had not progressed very far before its leaders became interested in education.

This was only a logical result of their insight into the value of the complete person. The abundant life could never be realized while the people were in darkness and superstition. Therefore from a very early date the Christian Church was interested in the education of the people, especially the children and youth.

By the end of the sixth century Roman schools had been swept away. The Church became almost the sole occupant of this field. And from then until now the Christian religion has pioneered in the field of education.

The educational work of the Church with which the public is most familiar is doubtless the foundation of the great universities. Certainly the fact that most of the important centers of learning of Western civilization for the past two thousand years have been founded by the Church is a matter of great consequence. It would be difficult to imagine what our civilization would have been like had these schools not been founded. For centuries they have sent forth a stream of trained leaders into society that have constituted the major force in determining the course of progress for the whole world during these centuries.

Detailed discussion of the origin of these schools would be impossible in a work of this compass. Even a catalogue of them would be too long. But the significance of this vast Christian educational development will be suggested by the names of a few of these universities. On the continent we think of such institutions as Bologna, Padua, Naples, Vienna, Prague, Basel, Louvain, Paris, Erfurt, Heidelberg, and Leipsic.

Some of the universities of the Church each enrolled thousands of students even as far back as the Middle Ages.

The development of Great Britain could hardly be understood apart from the influence of Oxford and Cambridge, universities that owe their very life to the Church.

In the United States William and Mary, Harvard, Yale, Brown, Columbia, Princeton, and Amherst all suggest the historic interest of the Church in education. Later denominational colleges sprang up all over the nation, some of which developed into large universities; and these all contributed significantly to the progress of the country.

As further illustration of the interest of the Church in education three of the leading universities of the South have been founded by one denomination in a period of less than two decades. These universities are: Southern Methodist, Emory, and Duke. Scarritt College for Christian Workers, fostered by the same denomination, has had its chief growth in the last decade.

*Art.*—Christianity likewise furnished the inspiration for the art of Western civilization. Art was fostered for at least two reasons.

First, it was useful in teaching the people and in nurturing their spiritual life. For example, the art of painting was encouraged by churchmen on the ground that the people who could not read would learn from the pictures. There was also a great demand for music in

the services of the Church. Architecture was also obviously useful.

Second, Christianity stimulated the most powerful and varied emotions in the people. Christian art furnished an outlet for these emotions. The artists at the beginning of European civilization, and for many centuries thereafter, were profoundly religious men. Their subjects were, therefore, inevitably religious.

From the thirteenth to the sixteenth century Christianity produced ten or a dozen painters who will rank among the leaders in art of all time. Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, Michelangelo, and Raphael are examples. Specimens of their work are such masterpieces as the "Last Supper," "Assumption of the Virgin," "Last Judgment," and the "Sistine Madonna."

Many of our more modern artists, such as Rembrandt, Hofmann, and Holman Hunt have received their inspiration from religion.

The power of Christianity in the field of architecture is attested by the beauty of the gothic structures of both Europe and America.

In the field of music the Christian religion has no doubt been the greatest inspiration of all time. The first conservatories were organized to train singers for the Churches. The first organ was used by Charlemagne in the eighth century. Bach, Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart all received their inspiration from religion. Such compositions as "The Creation," "Saul," "The Last Judgment," "The Ascension," and "The Messiah" suggest the importance of the contribution that religion

has made to music through the inspiration of men of almost unparalleled genius.

## Christianity an Aid and Inspiration to Political Liberty

Some one has said that the four Gospels are the protoplasm of democracy. In another striking figure of speech the Christian's conception of the sacred individuality of the soul is likened to the spinal cord of civilization. Liberal institutions have not flourished outside of Christianity. Some one has said: "The Bible is the most inflammatory book that could be circulated among a servile people." The divine right of persons is substituted for the divine right of kings. The German philosopher Nietzsche, said: "The poison of the teaching of equal rights for all has been spread abroad by Christianity more than by anything else." An enemy thus unwittingly praises a great movement.

The Christian Church has participated directly in the struggle for liberty. For example, the Magna Charta, extracted from King John at Runnymede in 1215 A.D. was the foundation of modern political freedom. The document was written by Archbishop Langton, and was presented to the king in the name of "The Army of the Lord." His followers were also for the most part good churchmen.

The Puritans of England wrote a notable chapter in the story of the world struggle for liberty. True, their direct aim was religious freedom; but political and religious freedom are so inextricably woven together

that they cannot be separated. These Puritans "amid peril, fire, and sword" received from the Bible their inspiration to carry on.

In early America, political and religious liberty were closely associated. Roger Williams, a profoundly religious man, founded the colony of Rhode Island, which is said to have been the first country in the world to grant complete liberty of conscience and complete separation of Church and State.

The names of George Fox, William Penn, Lord Baltimore, George Washington, and many others of colonial days and before, whose lives and works made possible the liberty of the English-speaking people drew their inspiration largely from the Christian religion.

Institutions are in reality the product of the character of the people whose group activities create them. Christianity's development of the person was certain to transform government. The man who recognizes his fellow as a brother will not desire to be called master. The New Testament conception of persons could not avoid deadly conflict with autocratic government. Hence throughout European history the Christian religion, often unconsciously, has been creating the type of character and infusing the spirit that would ultimately lead to the development of liberal institutions.

### A New Type of Man

Christianity's great service to the world in the last analysis, and chiefly, does not consist in any specific contribution that was made to this or that area of

human development. The fundamental service performed for society was the creation of a new type of man—a man of higher moral ideals, better spiritual insight, and more devoted to the common good.

"When I think of the great bodies of opinion which sustain the affairs of the world, it seems to me that the heart and nucleus of them is the principle of Christianity. . . . The conservation of that great fountain of all that is just and righteous is one of the most important things conceivable, infinitely more important than the things which those of us attempt who take some part in administering the external affairs of the world."[3]

"The country needs more religion. . . . The government will be able to get out of the people only such virtue as religion has placed there."[4]

Early Christianity was motivated by the release of the spirit of the omnipotent God in the souls of men, not primarily as a psychic phenomenon, but as an actuality of experience. The presence and power of God was as real to them as the presence and love of their own children. The release of such omnipotence could not but result in vast and fundamental social transformations, a sufficient reason to account for the fact that only in Christendom has there been true progress in two millenniums. In every important phase of

[3] From an address by Woodrow Wilson, Potomac Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, 1915.

[4] From an address by Calvin Coolidge before the Annual Convention of the Congregational Churches, 1925.

progress during this long period of time the Christian ideal has been present as the chief motive.

Those who stand now between the past and the future, and upon whom rests the responsibility of determining the course and spirit of the immediate future, must be utterly blind to fact and dead to gratitude if they do not consecrate themselves to the service of the Christian ideal.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."[5]

### Topics for Discussion

1. Do you think it possible or desirable to separate personal and social religion? How do you account for the fact that great revivals of religion have usually resulted in very significant social reforms? This is admirably illustrated by the work of Mr. Wesley. Do you think prohibition could ever have been enacted without the aid of religion?

2. Discuss the influence of the Church and Church people on the social movements of your own community. Also on larger social problems, such as working conditions, housing conditions, the white slave evil, and war and peace.

3. Has Christ the power to transform persons to-day? Can you give examples?

[5] Hebrews 12: 1, 2.

4. Can you name relics of pagan thought that remain in the modern mind?

5. What transformations of persons will yet be necessary before a Christian world order will be possible?

6. Can you think of institutions in modern society through which one can contribute to the welfare of his fellows other than those motivated by the Christian spirit?

## CHAPTER XI

## WE PRESS ONWARD

No past utility entitles an institution to present support except as past service is indicative of possible present and future usefulness. According to a law of nature all forms of life that fail to achieve perpetual adaptability ultimately die. The Church, of course, is subject to this condition. Therefore, its plea for support must rest upon what it can now do.

### Major Modern Religious Needs

*Further Development of Persons.*—Roger Babson estimates that the business of America is due to the enterprise of two per cent of the population. He further charges our school system with inefficiency on the basis of the claim that not five per cent of the souls of the pupils are really awakened. The same writer believes that the productive agencies of the United States are only about twenty per cent efficient. It is granted, of course, that statements of this kind can only be approximately correct. But since they are made by a statistician of unusual experience and insight, they should receive serious consideration.

Mr. Babson is thoroughly convinced that the Christian religion is capable of furnishing the incentives that are necessary to the creation of a more productive type of person. It instills such virtues as "industry, courage, ambition, thrift," moral restraint, honesty, and

good will, all of which contribute to the creativeness of the person.

When the Kingdom of God is sought in this vital fashion it is to be expected that a good living will be the result for both the individual and society. It is not a matter of accident that religious people are so much better off materially on an average than others. Religion makes better producers of them.

All forms of progress now lag because of the retarded development of persons. There is, moreover, nothing in all the world that will accelerate progress like those movements that are able to stimulate and develop persons. Undeveloped persons are a dead weight to progress. The need of the world is living souls. Nothing that society can do for a person is of much consequence. But when a person is inspired to create for himself, then permanent good is really accomplished.

"I gave a beggar from my little store of wealth some gold.
He spent the shining ore, and came again and yet again,
Still cold and hungry as before.
I gave a thought, and through that thought of mine
He found himself, the man supreme, divine,
Fed, clothed, and crowned with blessing manifold,
And now he begs no more."[1]

*World-Wide Spiritual Undergirding.*—The present age has acquired control over the resources of nature away and beyond the control of any previous period of the world's history. The result is unparalleled wealth.

[1] True Charity." From "Poems of Power," by Ella Wheeler Wilcox." W. B. Conkey Company, Publishers

Wealth is a form of power. Like all other forms of power it has alternate possibilities. It may be used either for good or for evil.

A truly world-wide civilization is now a certainty if not an accomplished fact. Railways, postal service, the telegraph, the telephone, the radio, steamships, international trade, and the universality of science have worked wonders in the making of the world over into a neighborhood. Nothing can prevent the further development of this process except the destruction of these unifying agencies.

No form of life, social or individual, is adequate or safe until it is undergirded by spiritual power. Moreover, the spiritual leadership of the world of to-day is a greater task than has ever before faced any religion. It is not now the matter of a continent with a hundred or so millions of people, most of them slaves, or else very ignorant, docile people to be led. It is now a problem of all continents with many hundreds of millions of people, increasing at the rate of probably fifty thousand per day. The sheer magnitude of the modern world is now almost beyond comprehension.

There is, however, much more than mere magnitude involved. Social problems are much more complex and urgent than ever before. To bind all races, classes, and nations into a comprehensive unity is more than has ever been really attempted by any agency. Yet the demand comes from all parts of the world that just that thing be done. Millions of people, the most idealistic among us, would have nothing to do with any religion

that did not attempt to bind the world together in a brotherhood.

There is an additional problem before modern civilization that the older nations did not face. Large groups of people can no longer get away from their unfavorable circumstances by migrations as they once did, as was the case with the Pilgrim Fathers. The whole of the earth's surface is now occupied or controlled by strong ambitious nations. More than ever before the migration of peoples is restricted. There is simply no place to which dissatisfied people in large numbers may go in search of freedom. When one contemplates the future of freedom, he must imagine what would probably have happened in Western Europe had there been no America as a place of refuge. Frontiers will no longer furnish the seed plot of courage, freedom, and morality, as in time past, for the simple reason that the frontiers themselves are passing.

Can Christianity take the person where he now is, in city slum or mansion, enmeshed in the modern industrial order, with all its deification of materialism, and make a Christlike person of him? Can Christianity go into China, take the Chinaman where he is, and as he is, and there cleanse and enrich his life as Christ saved Palestinian peasant and Roman citizen? Can Christianity really create the cosmopolitan and spiritual mind in the modern world? When governments failed to unify the mind of medieval Europe the Church stepped into the breach and accomplished the result desired. Can the Church to-day make each individual see in every other

individual a brother? That is the challenge with which the modern world squarely faces religion.

### The Present Status of the Church

*The Mind of the Church.*—On the whole the Christian Church of to-day probably has the best balanced program in its history. This of course is the result of a better understanding of the mind of Christ. There are two elements in his thinking that have special significance at this point.

First, the abundant life in terms of normal development. That is to say, Jesus desired the complete development of all persons in the world in body, mind, spirit, and in social relations—the elements that constitute the foundation of a Christian social order. Jesus, therefore, served all phases of human life in complete disregard of whether the need was mental, physical, or spiritual.

That the modern Church is keenly alive to the needs of the whole person is demonstrated by the types of work actually being done by the Church. *In the home field*, for example, the Church is conducting work in city industrial districts, in mining sections, in mill districts, in the army and navy, among the Indians, Negroes, Mexicans, and other underprivileged elements.

Moreover, this home work is of the greatest possible variety, administering to every phase of human need. Hospitals, orphanages, clinics, schools, recreation, teaching, preaching, saving are all familiar terms in the program of the modern Church.

*In foreign work* also the desire to create the abundant life finds expression. A foreign mission station, when adequately equipped, makes provision for the development of the whole person. Hence each station will have a hospital, a school, and a church. Probably not in past history has the Christian spirit been so symmetrically expressed as in the program now being actually conducted by the Churches on the foreign mission fields.

*Magnitude of the Church Program.*—The Christian Church is now the most powerful organization that has ever existed on the earth. It has by far more people who give it voluntary allegiance (numbers reaching into hundreds of millions) than even the greatest nations. Its revenue, voluntarily contributed, is greater than that of any government. And it elicits more voluntary service for the good of humanity than all other institutions in the world combined.

*In the United States* alone there are nearly fifty million people who are members of some Church. This constituency is greatly enlarged when those who are influenced by the Church, though not communicants, are included. The Churches have gained approximately twenty million members in the past twenty-five years. There are approximately seventeen million people in the Sunday schools. Last year (1927) the Churches of America received for their work one billion seventy-nine million dollars. The statistics of the American Churches read like the figures of the government of a first-class nation.

*The foreign mission program* is simply colossal. In the

"World Missionary Atlas" fifty-one pages are required to list the missionary organizations of Protestant Churches alone. The Great Commission has certainly been heeded.

In a work of this compass it would be impossible to give exhaustive statistics on missionary activities. However, the statement of a few facts will serve to illustrate the magnitude of the movement. The sum of $75,000,000 is given annually to this work. There are 30,000 missionaries; 152,000 native workers; 47,000 elementary schools with 2,226,000 pupils. There are also 101 colleges and universities with 25,000 students; 461 Bible and training schools with 12,000 students.

To heal the bodies of the non-Christian world the Protestant Churches are operating 19 medical schools and 72 schools for nurses. There are 900 foreign physicians and 700 native physicians employed by the Church. In addition there are 6,000 trained assistants. There are 1,000 hospitals with 32,000 beds, and 1,700 dispensaries. In one year the dispensaries gave 11,000,000 treatments. In the same period of time, through the work of the hospitals, 200,000 operations were performed and 4,800,000 individual patients were treated.

In the field of philanthrophy, among other things, the foreign boards of Protestant Churches operate 361 orphanages, 104 leper asylums, 47 homes for uninfected children of lepers, 32 institutions for the blind and deaf. There are also 114 miscellaneous philanthropic institutions.

In the non-Christian world there are 37,000 organized

congregations and 51,000 other places where religious meetings are held. There are more than three million communicants, and a Christian constituency of not less than ten million. The records show 50,000 Sunday schools with more than three million members. More than 17,000,000 Bibles are distributed annually.[2]

*The Church Pioneering.*—The non-Christian world is now doubtless as well or better churched than was the Roman Empire at the close of the first century of our era. There is scarcely a strategic center in the world that hasn't in it already a group of Christians of influence. As Paul and his associates planted the Christian Church in the leading cities of Europe and Asia Minor, from which their influence spread out to the whole empire, so the Church of to-day is planting the gospel in the centers of the entire world. It is altogether probable that future historians will be interested in Tokyo, Shanghai, Peking, Singapore, Bombay, Calcutta, and Constantinople for the same reason that modern historians are interested in the cities of the New Testament. It appears certain that Christianity is pioneering a new civilization for the world of to-day as it was pioneering a new civilization for Europe twenty centuries ago.

*The Church Taking Root.*—From every part of the earth, and from men of every walk of life, there comes striking testimony that the gospel is rooting itself deep

[2] These statistics are taken from the "Missionary Atlas of the World," 1926, supplemented by data from denominational journals more recently published.

into the soul of the pagan world. A few years ago the Japanese government called a conference of the philanthropic workers of the country. One in ten present was a Christian, although only one in two hundred of the empire as a whole is a Christian. A distinguished Chinese citizen said: "What success has been attained in the anti-opium campaign is due largely to the missionaries." Lord John Lawrence, Viceroy of India, has been quoted as saying that "the missionaries have done more to benefit India than all other agencies combined. Wherever missionaries work they are able to secure unqualified testimonials as to the good they are doing from impartial and able judges."

There is scarcely a social evil on earth, in Christian or non-Christian country, now being seriously attacked, that the attack is not motivated by Christian sentiment. Whether it is opposition to foot binding, exposure of children, or the opium traffic in China, the caste system in India, or the saloon in the United States, Christianity is in the front-line trenches. The true Christian has always been the mortal foe of those forces that militate against the realization of the abundant life for everybody.

*Just Beginning.*—Notwithstanding the fact that great progress has been made in missions, progress perhaps beyond the most optimistic dream of the pioneer missionaries, the truth remains that we have only made a beginning. A few facts will reveal the magnitude of the unfinished task. In India 95 per cent of the men and 99 per cent of the women are totally ignorant. In China 95 per cent of the population is

ignorant, and there is only one trained physician to each four hundred thousand of the population.[3]

Fifteen million people in Java are wholly untouched by the gospel. Likewise with thirty millions in central South America. Africa has 160 medical missionaries for a population of one hundred and thirty-five millions of people; India has two hundred and ninety for a population of at least three hundred millions of population.[4]

Pages of dismal statistics could be produced to show how much remains to be done. Hence it is now true, as it has always been, that the task before the Church is equal to its utmost strength. If the modern Church refuses the heroic standards of life, it can in no wise meet the present opportunity and obligation. If Christians think first of their own ease and comfort, a bright prospect will fade into dull disappointment.

*But Success in the Evangelization of the World Is Now Possible.*—Dr. Egbert W. Smith is authority for the information that it required the first hundred years of missionary activity to convert a million non-Christians. The second million converts came in twelve years; and the third million required less than six years. Such facts as these are not a signal for cessation of effort, but rather encouragement to go forward. Moreover, the emphasis that Christianity places on saving the last man concentrates attention on all those who have not yet been reached.

[3] Babson: "Religion and Business," page 128. The Macmillan Company.

[4] "The Desire of All Nations," Chapter VII. Smith. Doubleday, Doran & Co.

## Reaching the World through the Church

At intervals the average Church member is given an opportunity to contribute money, time, and talent to the program of the Church. What interpretation is the individual Christian to put upon such a demand for service? For example, the Church member is asked to make a contribution to missions. Is this to be interpreted as an exacting demand? Is not the Church right in assuming an intelligent interest in the work of the Kingdom on the part of its constituency? On the assumption of the interest of its membership in the saving of the world it has set up an organization to serve the world. Thus it becomes the channel through which the benevolent Christian spirit may be expressed, a spirit the existence of which the Church has a perfect right to assume in its constituency.

The general organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, will illustrate the possibility of service through the Churches. There appears to be a great fivefold purpose in this organization.

First, concern of the favored for the welfare of the unfavored. This benevolent motive must be interpreted in the broadest terms and in the deepest humility. It includes physical, mental, and spiritual conditions. The rich aid the poor; the educated place their talents at the disposal of their fellows; and those who have received Christ desire to give him to the world. Herein is the humility of the missionary movement. We take our religion to the non-Christian world, not because we

in ourselves are better than pagans, but because the Christian God is better than pagan gods.

Two of our general boards are especially charged with the responsibility of administering to the welfare of unfavored peoples. They are the Board of Church Extension and the Board of Missions.

Second, religious education is occupying an increasingly important position in the thought and effort of the Church. It is more and more realized that, although one may decide in a moment to be a Christian, the nurture of a Christian character requires that much time be given to worship, study, and practice. It is further realized that the Church must remain in the field of higher education if the quality of the Christian religion is to remain in the thought life of the world.

The two Boards that mainly represent the educational purpose of the Church are: The Board of Education and the Sunday School Board. The combined demands of these two organizations upon the Church is legitimately very great.

Third, the Church seeks to serve the physical needs of the people through its hospitals, medical schools, and gifts to retired ministers. Also many Annual Conferences, districts, and individual congregations support institutions that administer to physical needs, such as orphanages.

Fourth, the Church attempts to render aid to the cause of social righteousness. The General Conference expresses itself at this point through the Board of Temperance and Social Service.

Fifth, the Church provides for the expression of the religious life of its people according to the desires of special groups. Notable examples of this type of provision are the Epworth League, the Woman's Missionary Society, and the Board of Lay Activities. Each of these groups appeals to a special interest, and the service is rendered on the basis of a program in behalf of the work of the whole Church. Of course, other illustrations of this statement could be furnished.

### Significant Modern Religious Developments

*Missions.*—Although the missionary motive is as old as Christianity, it has received exceptional emphasis in modern times. The idea of a world gospel has always been at least latent in the Church. Two new social elements that have been developed in this era, democracy and world-wide contacts, have blended perfectly with the Christian ideal. The result is unparalleled missionary activity.

*Lay Activities.*—Both the program and the spirit of the modern Church yield themselves to the development of lay activities. The more vital interpretation of Christianity leads from the idea of priestly control. The true apostolic succession is of the spirit and not of the formal laying on of hands. Hence a layman's piety and wisdom are at par in the modern Christian movement. Our democracy has also led to the recognition of the place of women, children, and youth in the Church.

Moreover, the magnitude of the task before the Church has made two important contributions to the

ecclesiastical mind. First, the greatness of the Christian undertaking has appealed to the imagination of the masses of the Church, especially to men and women of exceptional ability and insight. Second, the demand for resources to carry on so great a program has rendered necessary the enlistment of men and money from every possible quarter.

*Religious Education.*—The program of religious education, as Evangelical Christian Churches interpret that program, has become one of the most significant developments in the modern world, religious or otherwise. It has made its way by exercising the fundamental insight that, if religion is life, then its principles are essential to the nurture of the normal life process.

In the interest of the Sunday school the argument is frequently made that the greater portion of Church members come from the efforts of this institution. Doubtless it is true that the Sunday school has played a large part in bringing most people to a decision for the Christian life.

But, after all, the main problem of the Church has never been to get members. The real problem has been, and is, one of quality—the production of true Christian culture of spirit. Egyptian art was usually poor because it tried to express greatness by size. The representation of a very great man, for example, must be very large. The religious education movement has within itself the possibility of saving modern Christianity from the defect of Egyptian art. Its conception

of the principle of development in the creation of character; its mediation of spiritual nurture according to group needs; and its provision for service suited to the interest of the persons serving—all contribute significantly to quality. This is particularly necessary in the midst of a world program that necessarily gives great emphasis to magnitude.

### The Local Congregation

The program of the local congregation is exceedingly important. Here the life and work of the Church make direct appeal to the rank and file of the people. According to the efficiency of this local group shall the power of the denomination, and even of the whole Christian world, be.

There are four fundamental elements in an adequate program for the local Church. All of these have been present in every healthy congregation. These essentials to congregational progress are: *Worship, study, service giving* (which, of course, is a form of service).

Worship is placed first in the list because of its initial and logical preëminence. Here the soul responds to God and grows in his likeness. Naturally, when Christ-like motives are quickened in one's life, the desire to spread the good news results. Therefore, what, more specifically, is the meaning of the kingdom, and what are its needs? Study is, therefore, essential to prepare one for effective participation in this program.

*To Feel and to Know Is Not Sufficient.*—One must actually participate in the work to be a vital Christian.

Hence, personal service must be rendered. One of the greatest needs of the modern Church is the ability to command the time and the talents of its people. Moreover, the very magnitude and nature of the program require large sums of money for successful execution and expansion at home and abroad. The true Christian, therefore, will be a liberal giver.

The following fourfold program was attempted with some degree of success at McKendree Methodist Church, Nashville, Tenn.

A suggested Program of Stewardship for McKendree by which it is hoped to enlist the entire membership of the congregation on the basis of loyalty in a Program of Worship, Study, Service, and Giving that McKendree may keep her place as an effective organization for the extension of the Kingdom of God both at home and abroad.

This outline is designed to help each person find his or her place in this program.

I. WORSHIP

Will you participate in the worship of the congregation regularly?.....

1. Sunday services:
   (*a*) Morning.....
   (*b*) Evening.....
2. Midweek prayer services?.....

II. STUDY

Will you participate in some study program?

1. Bible.....
2. Missions.....
3. Civic problems.....
4. Leadership training.....
5. .....

6. .....
7. .....
8. .....

### III. Service

What definite service would you be willing to render?.....
What is the approximate time you could give per week?.....

Form of Service:
1. Officer or teacher.....
2. Music:
   (*a*) Vocal.....
   (*b*) Instrumental.....
3. Visitation.....
4. Social service.....
   (*a*) Flowers.....
   (*b*) Services at settlement houses.....
   (*c*) Services at small Churches, etc.....
   (*d*) Other forms of service.....
5. Personal Evangelism.....
6. Week-day work with children.....
7. Use of car.....
8. Carpentry, etc.....
9. Poster making.....
10. .....
11. .....
12. .....

What civic or religious service do you render other than through McKendree?.....
.....

### IV. Giving

1. Will you give regularly to the support of the Church?.....
2. Will you set apart a definite portion of your income for the support of the Church?.....
3. Will you give sacrificially?.....

Signed.....

This program was outlined with special reference to what the congregation was already doing. It could, therefore, be only suggestive to any other congregation so far as the details are concerned.

This same program is being tried with modifications at Mulberry Street Methodist Church, Macon, Ga., under the leadership of the Director of Religious Education, Mr. E. E. French; also at Central Methodist Church, Asheville, N. C.

In smaller city Churches, and in country Churches, this program of work should be radically modified to suit the needs of the local situation. However, modification should be confined to details, as the four elements of worship, study, service, and giving are essential regardless of the size or location of the Church.

In conclusion, it should be said that a fundamental problem of the modern Church is to inspire and enlighten the individual member. Those who desire to serve any portion of the human family in any way will find the opportunity to do so through the channels of service now in existence. For example, if one desires to assist in the education of the Chinese or the Koreans, the way is open to do so through mission schools. Likewise it is possible for the individual in an American Church to heal the sick in Africa, or to evangelize in Japan. Progress in saving the world to the more abundant life awaits the quickening of interest in the hearts of Christian people. The organization of the Churches is *now* adequate to serve as the channel through which Christian good will may effectually

reach humanity. The problem of going forward is squarely up to the individual.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Discuss the problem of undeveloped persons on the basis of your own observation.

2. To what extent, in your judgment, has the Church succeeded in applying the Christian standard of values to money? Do you think the modern Church member is in danger of seeking personal comfort and often luxury before he does anything at all for the Kingdom?

3. Discuss the adaptability of Christianity to the needs of the present world order.

4. State your reasons why you think the missionary program is succeeding.

5. Discuss the organization of the modern Church with reference to its possibilities as a channel through which the individual can serve the world.

6. Make out a fourfold program of worship, study, service, and giving for your own congregation, taking into account the strength and location of the congregation and what it is already doing.

## CHAPTER XII

## THAT LIBERTY BE NOT ABUSED

"There is no bourne, no ultimate. The very farthest star
But rims a sea of other stars, that stretches just as far.
There's no beginning and no end. As in the ages gone,
The greatest joy of joys shall be the joy of going on."[1]

Our generation lives in a period of progress in the most comprehensive and far-reaching sense. With startling rapidity the human family is breaking away from its old moorings and setting forth on seas hitherto uncharted. It has even been said that more change has come in human affairs in the past fifty years than in the five thousand years prior thereto. The modern man is as eager for progress as was the older Chinaman for the stability of the customs of his ancestors. The desirability of change and progress is a dogma of our day.

This breaking away from the past involves every phase of life. The economic revolution has gone far. It is practically complete so far as the replacement of hand work by machinery is concerned. But with regard to the application of science to the methods of production and the problem of distribution much remains to be done before poverty and squalor shall cease to curse humanity.

The theory of government held by civilized countries

[1] Sam Walter Foss: "Songs of the Average Man," page 51. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co. Used by permission.

has almost completely changed. Only a comparatively short time ago a French monarch could seriously say, and as if he were enunciating a self-evident proposition: "I am the State." In the face of that statement the American colonies successfully affirmed that all just powers of government are derived from the people governed—a principle greatly extended in the world by Woodrow Wilson's doctrine of self-determination for weaker peoples. Both the political map and the complexion of the world are becoming new.

One might also write at length about the changes that have come in other portions of human society, such as religion, education, moral ideals, sex relations, and social customs. But perhaps the greatest, certainly one of the greatest, changes that have come into the life of modern society is the new status of the individual. Moreover, it is undoubtedly true that much of the progress humanity has enjoyed has been due to the freedom of the individual, a freedom that has released vast resources of creative energy hitherto suppressed by the enforced uniformities of society.

### The Emancipation of the Individual

1. *The emancipation of the individual is a fact largely accomplished already.* In the field of religion, for example, the individual no longer looks to the Church as a corporation having a monopoly on divine favor and grace. At least this is true of the more enlightened parts of our civilization. In medieval times a person could be thrown into terror at the prospect of an all-

powerful Church withdrawing its favor. The hope of heaven was said to be lost to any person who displeases the head of this institution, the representative of God on earth. The same mental state persists in many parts of the world even to-day. But the number of such persons is diminishing.

The lack of loyalty on the part of Protestants is often a topic for very disparaging comment. And surely no one can view deficiency at this point with indifference; for loyalty is a virtue that ranks high in the scale of things essential, both to the good character of the individual and to the welfare of institutions. However, it is to be doubted if allegiance through fear or superstition can be regarded as true loyalty. Certainly one cannot believe for a moment that the lack of loyalty to the Church now so common among Protestants will ever be corrected by a return to the yoke of spiritual bondage from which their forefathers escaped. The emancipation of the individual in religion is an accomplished fact for many millions of people, and there will be no turning back at this point.

The individual has also been largely emancipated in the field of domestic relations. The wife no longer throws herself on the funeral pyre of her husband, dominated by a group demand so strong as not to be broken even by death. Even the child is recognized as a person with inalienable rights by modern society. The family hasn't the right to destroy the child's life as in ancient society, neither can that individual be cruelly treated. Neglect of the child is a crime. Hence,

compulsory school laws have sprung up far and wide over the world. The very method of education has been profoundly modified by the increased emphasis on the preëminence of persons, though the person should be a child.

The recognition of the emancipation of persons on the part of the powers of government is quite obvious. The actions of no one can be curtailed except by due process of law and on the theory that such curtailment is for the good of society, which, in the last analysis, means that one person shall not so conduct himself as to interfere with the liberties of others. Likewise in the field of custom, and even of morals, there has been a steadily increasing tendency to give the individual greater latitude and freedom. *The emancipation of the individual is one of modern civilization's most striking realities.*

2. *The emancipation of the individual is desirable.* Society can never be highly creative while the individual is shackled by government, Church, custom, or any other institution or force. The creators are always in a very important sense nonconformists. The prophets, Paul, Savonarola, Wycliffe, Luther, Wesley, Washington, and the other leaders of human progress have without exception broken with contemporary standards and have become pilgrims in new and unexplored fields. Not uniformity, but initiative, constitutes the dynamic of progress. Initiative is a quality of individual life; uniformity is a characteristic of nonprogressive group life.

The release of the individual in America undoubtedly has had most to do with our national development. The apostolic Church gave unusual liberty to the individual, and the result was one of the world's most creative epochs. Likewise the rediscovery of the individual by Luther set Christianity on the march again, and with great power. The Evangelical Revival also belongs to the world's most creative epochs largely because of the power of its appeal to persons.

### Dangers of Freedom

1. One of the most obvious dangers of freedom is the slavish following of desire. "Whatever the person's appetites crave should be granted," says this interpretation of liberty. Sometimes the justification of this philosophy is no more refined than the unleashed expression of animal desire, as in the case of the libertine or the drunkard. By others justification is expressed in terms of a psychology everlastingly decrying all forms of repression. Probably the lowest and most dangerous form of this extremely individualistic expression of desire is the seeking of thrills, as in the Loeb and Leopold case and in the Hickman case. It is assumed that existence of desire is sufficient justification for its gratification, regardless of the welfare of others. Conduct thus motivated becomes fundamentally emotional and anti-social.

Life, when motivated by this extreme individualism, can be neither moral nor religious. Morality and religion are both rooted in relationships. The former

deals with human relations; the latter embraces both human and divine relations. Both religion and morality must be able to say: "You and I." The only consistent product of pure individualism is anarchy—moral, social, and political.

2. Freedom may be interpreted as mere release from authority. Thus it becomes a negative and destructive force in life. Men long bound by irksome external authority find themselves released. There is no inner motivation to take the place of the defunct external compulsion. There is thus no effective urge, inner or outer, to make men say "ought" in response to duty. Life under such conditions is given over either to common passions or else is merely negative.

Without an attempt to define freedom, it should be said that at least the following elements would have to be included in an adequate definition: (1) A state of abundant self-realization and (2) self-expression unhampered by personal limitation or external coercion.

### Social Continuity

The significance of the past to the present is due to the continuity of social values and the institutions that carry them forward. Men and movements that represent permanent worth have a cumulative power in society. For example, Christ and democracy are so essentially true that both have gained in power through the centuries.

*The adjustment of the person to institutions is essential to both progress and conservation.* Institutions carry

forward in society the ideals of the men who created them. Thus each generation is blessed by its ancestors.

*It must be remembered that most of each of us is history—modern or ancient.* Without vital contact with society the enrichment of the person must be very limited. Great leaders and reformers have been fully conscious of the value of the past by virtue of a vital rooting in it. It would be difficult to find an outstanding leader who was not well grounded in historic values. They have lived history in their own person, vital, evolving history, not static antiquities. Jesus came not to destroy, but to fulfill. The prophets, Paul, Luther, Wesley, and a host of others of the world's great, were emphatic on the proposition that they were not innovators. They interpreted the vital power and great worth of the fathers as incentives to further progress. They were most forward-looking men; yet they all could have said with Paul: "I worship the God of my fathers."[2] *They all worked in a margin of change closely joined to tested reality.*

Can a modern Christian be trusted to lead the present and prepare for the future if he is so dead in his perception of spiritual values as to be insensible to the significance of his religious heritage? A few examples will make plain the fact that we are the heirs of fruitful ages. The doctrines of the Church open vistas of human experience with God the value of which will abide always. The beliefs of the past interpret the aspirations of the periods in which they were evolved.

[2] Acts 24: 14.

Moreover, there is no doctrine that exists through the centuries except on the basis of its power to satisfy human need.

These doctrines include not only conceptions of God, but also deep convictions on human relationships. Tremendous moral and social energy has issued from the Christian conception of God. The individual has been made conscious of the saving power of Christ. This contribution has included at least two elements: first, a new conception of moral and spiritual standards for self; second, a new attitude toward one's fellow man resulting in the social morality of Christendom—best appreciated in contrast with the social standards of non-Christian civilizations.

Moreover, the influence of Christianity in the field of art and literature has been immense. Under this topic should be included the Bible itself and the influence of the Bible on so-called secular literature. The hymns of the Church have had a wide influence both on literature and the spirit of the people who have sung them. Architecture, painting, and sculpture have yielded to the power of the Christian ideal and have served that ideal. Drama, a form of art that has very largely slipped away from Christian influence, has in past centuries been intimately related to the Church.[3]

*The heritage of history is the difference between a civilized man and a savage.* The unnumbered billions of human beings who have preceded us on this planet have not labored without purpose. They have enriched

[3] See Chapter X.

the social soil in which this generation is planted. We, therefore, will live the most fruitful lives if progressively loyal to our heritage.

### Conditions of Successful Freedom

*Freedom succeeds where voluntary and enthusiastic loyalty takes the place of external coercion in the life of the free man.* Freedom means that institutions have said to the person: "We exist to serve you, including the service of furnishing a channel of expression for the group life of free persons." The genius of liberty has perceived the possibility of creating institutions that will unshackle the power of the individual so that he may realize the most abundant development of his powers. It is certain that this transition in social method can succeed only when the released individual returns whole-hearted and sacrificial loyalty to the institutions that have set him free.

Thus freedom is gained from both coercion and personal selfishness. In this way it is possible for free institutions to continue as the agencies of liberty and progress. Jesus evidently had both of these elements in mind when he announced his purpose to make men free indeed. The freedom that seeks deliverance from external coercion alone will so threaten social values that institutions responsible for the continuation of social existence will reassert their rights by again taking away personal liberty—precisely the thing that has happened in Italy under the *régime* of Mussolini.

*Every plea for liberty should be accompanied by an exhortation to loyalty.*

The writer was impressed during the recent national political campaign with how the discussion focused on the point of what the government should do for the people. Relatively little was said about what the people should do for the government. The emphasis ought to be changed. Is it not true that a populace seeking favors from the government in order that its bodily comforts and wants may be satisfied, and making little contribution to the government, not even voting except when personal and group desires are at stake, is a serious threat to the welfare of democratic institutions? One must deplore the formation of "blocs" in American life organized to secure favors for particular groups. Government by parties based on principle is better by far.

The same reasoning is applicable to racial, class, and international relationships. If favored groups oppress unfavored groups, the absence of the Christian spirit is thereby demonstrated.

With regard to the Church one searches the teachings of Christ in vain for commands setting forth the external aspects of the believer's obligation to it. Jesus boldly promulgated his Kingdom on the firm conviction that if one had his spirit he would be loyal to the program of his Kingdom.

Soon ecclesiastical administrators considered themselves too practical and sagacious to trust Jesus. They, therefore, began to coerce the individual into conform-

ity to group type, and this process continued till the days of Luther. Then freedom of the soul was again proclaimed.

Since the Reformation there have been two major efforts to restore motivation in the religious life of the person to its New Testament position: first, the Evangelical Revival, typed by John Wesley, who said, "If thy heart be as my heart, give me thy hand"—an admirable statement of complete religious liberty; second, the religious education movement, which is vigorously emphasizing inner motivation as the only adequate basis for the religious life.

Out of these two movements, and other forces of modern society, has come an unprecedented desire for religious liberty. The extent to which voluntary loyalty to social values, past and present, motivates this liberty will determine its ultimate value.

## Areas of Liberty

1. *Worship.*—Protestantism has no sacraments to withhold, no excommunications to execute; logically it has no official instrument of fear with which to attempt to compel worship. Only as love for God, and wonder and adoration, fill the soul of a free man does he worship. Recently at a certain summer resort there were many Protestants and Catholics spending a Sunday. The Catholics all went to mass at the neighboring church. But not one single Protestant attended the Church of his faith on that day. Was that not the abuse of liberty? Can liberty succeed on such a basis?

2. *Study.*—Protestantism grants the individual the right to interpret religion for himself. Did our forefathers die for a right that we do not care to exercise? Of what value to the individual is the right to interpret the Bible if the Bible is not interpreted? The inadequately manned and poorly equipped Sunday schools scattered over the Church suggest a precious privilege widely neglected. The service that the principles of the Christian religion could render to the solution of present-day problem is indispensable. Yet millions of Church members make little effort to understand the possibilities of their religion at this point. The Christian religion, moreover, has been definitely commissioned to bring the privilege of the abundant life to the world, while large numbers of its constituency scarcely know the mission of their faith, or the need of the abundant life among the hundreds of millions of this earth who starve for opportunity. The time is dead ripe for a revival of the desire to know among the freeborn sons of the gospel.

3. *Service.*—The inequalities of society are most obvious. This inequality extends over the whole life span from the cradle to the grave. Many are cursed with the lack of privilege from birth. Moreover, there is no class of society that does not need the service of every other social group. "From each man according to his ability and to each man according to his need, physical, mental, and spiritual," is the aim of the Christian program. No man can really know the meaning of Christian love until he commits himself

without reservation, and constantly, to the service of his fellows.

Moreover, Protestant Churches especially have placed great emphasis on lay activities. A sufficient number of types of service for every one to have opportunity to work have been provided, covering service to body, mind, and spirit, and on a world-wide scale and an all-class basis. To-day the man who desires to render service to his fellow man in any way may do so through his Church. *For a layman not to serve through his Church is to abuse the liberty received from the Church.*[4]

4. *Giving.*—In the chapter on "giving" the question of the tithe was purposely omitted. To be consistent, it seemed necessary to put giving on the same basis as any other form of Christian obligation; otherwise a unified approach to the subject of stewardship would be impossible. It also appears to the writer that a Biblical basis for the legalistic tithe, so far as the New Testament is concerned, would have to be based on eccentric exegesis. On the other hand, many thousands of Christians find great joy in systematically setting apart one-tenth of their income for the work of the Kingdom. These persons are among the most consecrated and most valuable people in the Church in all lines of endeavor. How can freedom produce similar liberality and consecration?

Certainly before giving can be placed on a basis of freedom there are at least two facts that one must

[4] See Chapter X.

take into account: first, the great need of the Church for funds to carry out its world-wide program, the only type of program that meets the requirements of the Christian purpose; second, the necessity of the sacrificial element in order to make giving Christian.

The future of civilization is in the balance at this hour. At home and abroad the paramount issue is whether the course of attempted progress shall be along Christian or pagan lines. This issue, in turn, will be determined by the degree of the sense of stewardship felt by Christians the world over. What sacrifice is the average Christian willing to make that China, Japan, and Africa may be started in the Christian way? Can there be a more ringing challenge to those who desire the spread of the Kingdom?

In the face of the fact that America's future has not yet been determined, our Churches spend very little on the religious training of youth, especially in the local Church. Thousands of Churches scarcely purchase sufficient literature for their Sunday schools. On account of insufficient funds adequate physical equipment has not been provided, while employed trained leaders, as directors of this work, are available only in relatively few of our Sunday schools.

The world is wide open to the gospel both at home and abroad, and at the same time the members of the Church individually have the resources necessary to occupy the field. No one can be a sincere and intelligent Christian who fails to respond in joyous, sacrificial giving to this world-wide appeal. Can the average

Church member, therefore, meet the demands of Christian sacrifice in a world of unprecedented opportunity, largely neglected, and give less than the tithe? Will the free Christian use his liberty in the interest of the selfish economy? Should liberty be degraded to the level of parsimony, the fruits of the modern Church will be most disappointing. Nothing less than joyous and sacrificial response to the need and opportunity of the hour can be adequate.

### Freedom and the Flaming Heart

External coercion was not practiced by New Testament Christians in giving, or in anything else, because a more adequate motive was in operation. Why talk to people about legalistic percentages when all was on the altar? Paul found it necessary to restrain the Christians of Macedonia in their giving.[5] The early Jerusalem believers voluntarily gave all.[6] It is a travesty on freedom to claim New Testament liberty and practice pagan selfishness.

Great achievement has come to the Church only as the result of the flaming heart. Our religion is not a creed, but a passion. Legalism has never imparted the fiery zeal necessary to consume the selfishness of the soul and to impart the dynamic of conquest. On the other hand, liberty uninspired by burning motives begets a deadening lethargy. Large sections of the Church to-day are fruitless because of that lethargy, an evil not to be corrected by more freedom, but by more

[5] 2 Corinthians 8: 1–6. [6] Acts 4: 32.

zeal. Only when one feels as Paul did can his hands be trusted to freely handle the priceless riches of Christ's Kingdom. "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."[7]

The seal on Adam Clark's grave is a candle burned down to the socket. Underneath is the inscription: "In living for others I am burned away."

"Every great movement that has stirred the depth of life and changed the face of history has sprung from some profound sentiment and powerful emotion." (Dr. John Watson.)

"I am constantly endeavoring to reduce my needs to the minimum. I feel morally guilty in ordering a costly meal, for it deprives some one else of a slice of bread—some child, perhaps, of a bottle of milk. My beloved wife feels exactly the same way about these things as I do. You know what I eat; you know what I wear. In all these years of my so-called success in music, we have not built a home for ourselves. Between it and us stand all the homeless in the world." (Fritz Kreisler.)

## What Is Life For?

"The most important question that ever engaged my mind is that of my personal responsibility to Almighty God." (Daniel Webster.)

### Topics for Discussion

1. Discuss individualism both from the point of view of its weakness and of its strength. How does individualism impair the efficiency of the Protestant Churches? Wherein is Protestantism strengthened by individualism?

[7] Galatians 2: 20.

2. In what ways is the present dependent upon the past? Can a program for the present or future be developed successfully without reference to the past? If not, why not? What is the danger of loyalty to the past? Give original examples of leaders who have received inspiration and guidance from the past.

3. Give two reasons why Christ did not attempt to found his religion on specific laws and regulations.

4. Give examples of the abuse of liberty in your own denomination. Also in your own congregation.

5. Do you think modern Protestantism would be strengthened by a reëmphasis on external authority?

6. What in your judgment is the remedy for the abuse of liberty?

7. Make a list of reasons for and against tithing.

8. Account for Fritz Kreisler's statement given on the preceding page.

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